THE WHITE LOTUS WAR



REBELLION & SUPPRESSION IN LATE IMPERIAL CHINA

YINGCONG DAI

VISIT...



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A NOTE ON DATES AND TERMINOLOGY

Years in this book appear according to both the Gregorian calendar and the Chinese lunar calendar. Specific dates (year/month/day), however, appear only according to the Chinese lunar calendar. Hence, 01/03/09 stands for the ninth day of the third month of the first year of the Jiaqing reign. "The New Year" in the book represents the Chinese Lunar New Year. Intercalary months occurred in three different years during the White Lotus War: 1797, 1800, and 1803. Those intercalary months are indicated by "inter" before the month; for example, inter06 means the second sixth month, which followed the regular sixth month.

Some Manchu and Mongol personal names are transliterated based on the original Manchu or Mongolian names, if they are known to the author: for example, Eldemboo (Manchu) and Cangling (Mongolian). For these, Chinese transliterations are given in the glossary as well. Some Manchu personal names that are better known in Chinese among Qing historians, such as Mingliang and Lebao, appear throughout in Chinese transliteration. In the glossary, their Manchu names appear in parentheses: for example, Mingliang (M: Mingliyang).

Translations of official titles are adopted from Charles Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*. For common official titles, such as governor, governor-general, and prefect, no Chinese terms are provided. For relatively rare official titles, Chinese terms appear in parentheses when the titles occur for the first time.

The following weights and measures are used in the book:

dou: 0.1 picul

hu: 2 piculs

li: about one-third mile

liang: one-sixteenth of 1 catty (*jin*), about 37 to 38 grams

sheng: 0.01 picul

shi (or *dan*): picul, about 100 catties
tael: *liang* in Chinese, 37 to 38 grams, main unit of silver currency
wen: "cash," unit of copper coins

REIGN PERIOD ABBREVIATIONS

DG Daoguang reign period, 1821–1850
KX Kangxi reign period, 1662–1722
JQ Jiaqing reign period, 1796–1820
QL Qianlong reign period, 1736–1795
SZ Shunzhi reign period, 1644–1661
YZ Yongzheng reign period, 1723–1735

CHRONOLOGY

1774 (QL39)
Founding of Hunyuan sect by Fan Mingde in Luyi, Henan.

1775 (QL40)
Crackdown on the Hunyuan sect; execution of Fan Mingde; exile of Liu Song and Wang Faseng to Longde, Gansu.

1777 (QL42)
Revival of the Hunyuan sect in Bozhou, Anhui.

1782 (QL47)
Persecution against the revived Hunyuan sect.

1788 (QL53)
Founding of the Sanyang sect by Liu Zhixie and Liu Song.

1792 (QL57)
Founding of Xitian Dacheng Jiao by Song Zhiqing.

1794 (QL59)
Late in the year, persecution against sectarians in central China; execution of Liu Song, Song Zhiqing, Qi Lin, et al.
59/10/15 (November 7), escape of Liu Zhixie from Fugou, Henan.

1795 (QL60)
Beginning of the year, start of the Miao uprisings.
Early in the year, decision on the dragon's day rebellion.

1796 (JQ01)
01/01/01 (February 9), Qianlong's abdication.

01/01/10–01/08/17 (February 18–September 17), Yidu uprising.
01/02/15–01/06/28 (March 23–August 1), siege of Dangyang.
Second month, start of the Xiangyang uprising.
01/05/06–01/06/27 (June 10–July 31), Xiaogan uprising.
01/06/09 (July 13), Yongbao's appointment as commander-in-chief of the suppression campaign.
01/08/24 (September 24), battle of Zhongxiang.
01/09/15 (October 15), start of the Dazhou uprising at Tingzipu; days later, start of the Dongxiang uprising.
Tenth month, start of the uprisings in Bazhou and Tongjiang, Sichuan.

1797 (JQ02)
01/12/17 (January 14), Yongbao's dismissal; Huiling's appointment as the second commander-in-chief.
02/01/25 (February 21), end of the uprisings in Xing'an, Shaanxi.
02/05/12–19 (June 6–13), crossing of the Han River in Shaanxi by the Xiangyang rebel force.
02/05/30 (June 24), Huiling's dismissal; Yimian's appointment as the third commander-in-chief.
Late summer, the Yao Zhifu–Wang Conger force's return to Hubei.
02/10/26 (December 13), Lebao's appointment as the fourth commander-in-chief of the campaign.

1798 (JQ03)
03/01/17 (March 4), end of the Changyang uprising in Hubei.
03/03/06 (April 21), demise of the Yao-Wang force in Hubei's Yunxi.
Late seventh month, Wang Sanhuai's surrender to Lebao.

1799 (JQ04)
03/12/02 (January 7), Luo Qiqing's capture in Yingshan, Sichuan.
04/01/01 (February 5), Ran Wenchou's capture in Tongjiang, Sichuan.
04/01/03 (February 7), death of the Qianlong emperor.
04/01/08 (February 12), Hešen's purge.
04/01/19 (February 23), Lebao's entitlement as "grand minister commander."
04/02/01 (March 6), Songyun's appointment as governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu.
04/07/17 (August 17), Lebao's dismissal; Mingliang's appointment as "grand minister commander"; Kuilun's appointment as Sichuan's governor-general.
04/08/17 (September 16), Mingliang's dismissal; Eldemboo's appointment as "grand minister commander."

04/08/23 (September 22), Nayancheng's appointment as imperial commissioner to Shaanxi; Yongbao's dismissal as Shaanxi's governor.
04/08/25 (September 24), Hong Liangji's letter to Jiaqing.
04/10/03 (October 31), Zhang Hanchao's suicide; then Mingliang's dismissal and arrest.
04/10/12 (November 9), Hu Qilun's death penalty.

1800 (JQ05)
05/01/08 (February 1), Songyun's dismissal as governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu.
05/01/15 (February 8), rebels' crossing of the Jialing River in Dingyuan, Sichuan.
05/01/18 (February 11), Mingliang's release from jail and rejoining of the campaign in Hubei.
05/02/01 (February 24), Lebao's release from jail and return to Sichuan.
05/03/06 (March 30), Ran Tianyuan's capture in Jiangyou, Sichuan.
05/03/18 (April 11), rebels' crossing of the Fu River in western Sichuan.
05/03/29 (April 22), Kuilun's dismissal and arrest.
05/inter04/15 (June 7), end of Nayancheng's mission.
05/06/23 (August 13), Kuilun's death penalty.
05/06/28 (August 18), Liu Zhixie's arrest in Yexian, Henan.
05/09/23 (November 9), Taibu's dismissal as Shaanxi's governor.
05/10/19 (December, 5), Šulin's appointment as governor-general of Huguang.

1801 (JQ06)
06/01/18 (March 2), killing of Gao the Second in Zhen'an, Shaanxi.
06/02/18 (March 31), Wang Tingzhao's arrest in Xixiang, Shaanxi.
06/04/01 (May 13), arrests of Gao the Third and Ma the Fifth.
06/04/09 (May 21), Šulin's death; Wu Xiongguang's appointment as governor-general of Huguang.
06/05/17 (June 27), Xu Tiande's drowning in Ziyang, Shaanxi; elimination of the Black Band.

1802 (JQ07)
07/05/30 (June 29), death of Fan Renjie by drowning in Zhushan, Hubei.
07/07/17 (August 14), killing of Gou Wenming in the Qinling Mountains.
07/08/12 (September 8), elimination of Pu Tianbao's band, the last

sizable rebel band.

1803 (JQ08)

07/12/16 (January 9), declaration of triumph.

08/07/15 (August 31), declaration of victory for the second time.

1804 (JQ09)

08/11/19 (January 1, 1804), Eldemboo's return to Beijing from Taiping, Sichuan.

09/02/18 (March 29), Eldemboo's return to the campaign as "imperial commissioner."

09/06/20 (July 26), Eldemboo's return to Beijing; Delengtai's appointment as commander-in-chief of the campaign.

09/08/01 (September 4), killing of Gou Wenrun; disintegration of the last rebel band.

09/09/05 (October 8), arrival of the third triumphant memorial in Beijing.

1805 (JQ10)

09/12/03 (January 3), Gou Chaojiu's capture in Nanzheng, Shaanxi.

10/03/10 (April 9), withdrawal of all the deployed troops; Delengtai's return to Chengdu.

Seventh month, death of Wang Zuojing, the last known rebel.

1806 (JQ11)

11/07/05–11/09/24 (August 18–November 4), Ningshan mutiny.

1807 (JQ12)

11/12/22–11/12/27(January 30–February 4), Suiding mutiny.

12/01/12–12/01/22 (February 18–28), Washiping mutiny.

MAIN CHARACTERS

REBEL SIDE

Fan Renjie (d. 1802), major leader of the Xiangyang rebels
Gao Junde (d. 1800), rebel chief of Xiangyang
Gao Tiande (d. 1801), coleader of the Gao-Ma band
Gao Tiansheng (d. 1801), Gao Tiande's cousin; coleader of the Gao-Ma band since 1800
Gou Wenming (d. 1802), rebel chief of Sichuan's Bazhou
Leng Tianlu (d. 1799), sectarian teacher of Dongxiang; Wang Sanhuai's deputy
Liu Song (d. 1794), key member of the Hunyuan sect
Liu Zhixie (1740?–1800), leader of the Hunyuan sect; cofounder of the Sanyang sect
Luo Qiqing (d. 1799), leader of the Bazhou uprising
Ma Chaoli (d. 1801), coleader of the Gao-Ma band
Ran Tianyuan (d. 1800), leader of the Blue Band; Ran Wenchou's nephew
Ran Wenchou (d. 1799), leader of the Tongjiang uprising
Song Zhiqing (d. 1794), cofounder of Xitian Dacheng Jiao
Wang Conger (d. 1798), known as Qi Wang Shi; rebel leader of Xiangyang
Wang Sanhuai (d. 1799), leader of the Dongxiang uprising
Wang Tingzhao (d. 1801), sectarian teacher; major leader of the Xiangyang rebels
Xu Tiande (d. 1801), sectarian teacher; leader of the Dazhou uprising
Yao Zhifu (d. 1798), sectarian teacher; major leader of the Xiangyang uprising
Zhang Hanchao (d. 1799), rebel leader of Xiangyang

Bi Yuan (1730–1797), governor-general of Huguang, 1795–1797
Cangling (1758–1838), Mongol bannerman; Huiling's younger brother; provincial military commander of Hubei, 1801–1802
Delengtai (1749–1809), Mongol bannerman; palace guardsman; grand minister consultant, 1799–1804; Chengdu general, 1800–1805
Eldemboo (1748–1805), commander-in-chief of the Mongol Bordered Blue Banner, 1796; commander-in-chief of the campaign and grand minister commander, 1799–1803
Funing (1739–1814), governor-general of Huguang, 1794–1795; governor-general of Sichuan, 1796–1797 (did not take the post)
Guwanghing (d. 1809), censor; Šulin's younger brother
Huiling (1743–1804), Mongol bannerman; banner vice commander-in-chief; commander-in-chief of the campaign, 1797; governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, 1801–1804
Jing'an (d. 1823), Henan's governor, 1795–1798; governor-general of Huguang, 1798–1799
Kuilun (1752–1800), governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang, 1796–1798; governor-general of Sichuan, 1799–1800
Lebao (1740–1819), commander-in-chief of the campaign, 1797–1799; grand minister commander, 1799; governor-general of Sichuan, 1798–1799, 1800–1810
Mingliang (1736–1822), banner vice commander-in-chief, 1796; commander-in-chief of the suppression campaign and grand minister commander, 1799; regional military commander of Yichang, 1800–1801
Nayancheng (1764–1833), Agūi's grandson; imperial commissioner and grand minister consultant, 1799–1800; acting governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, 1804
Qingcheng (d. 1812), provincial military commander of Zhili, 1792–1798; Chengdu general, 1799; regional military commander of Shan'an, 1800–1801; provincial military commander of Guyuan, 1801–1802; provincial military commander of Hubei, 1804–1805
Songyun (1754–1835), Mongol bannerman; governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, 1799–1800
Šulin (d. 1801), governor-general of Huguang, 1800–1801
Taibu (1734–1805), Mongol bannerman; governor of Shaanxi, 1799–1800
Wesibu (d. 1810), Henan's governor, 1798–1799; governor-general of Huguang, 1799–1800 and 1801; Hubei's governor, 1800–1801

Wu Xiongguang (1750–1833), Henan's governor, 1799–1801; governor-general of Huguang, 1801–1805

Yang Yuchun (1760–1837), Eldemboo's subordinate; provincial military commander of Gansu, 1800–1802; provincial military commander of Guyuan, 1802–1806

Yimian (d. 1812), governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, 1795–1799; commander-in-chief of the campaign, 1797–1798

Yongbao (1747–1808), Lebao's younger brother; commander-in-chief of Urumqi, 1795–1796; commander-in-chief of the campaign, 1796; governor of Shaanxi, 1799

INTRODUCTION

> I cannot excuse myself from managing all important military and national affairs, and key personnel and administrative matters.
>
> —THE QIANLONG EMPEROR, 1796

THE year 1796 was the year of the dragon according to the Chinese zodiac.[1] On New Year's Day of the lunar calendar, February 9, the eighty-four-year-old Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–1796), who had been on the throne for sixty years, ceremonially handed the imperial seal to his son, Yongyan, inaugurating the new Jiaqing reign (1796–1820).[2] The dragon year certainly made the occasion auspicious, as the dragon was the traditional symbol of the "Son of Heaven." Nevertheless, dissenters during Chinese history also used this symbol for instigating rebellion. Months before the dragon year, far from the capital and in their enclave in the hinterlands of the empire, sectarian leaders had decided that the dragon's hour on the dragon day in the dragon month of the dragon year (*chennian chenyue chenri chenshi*) would be an auspicious time for starting an insurrection to topple the Qing dynasty and establish a new kingdom. The dragon date turned out to be the tenth day of the third month of the first year of the Jiaqing reign (01/03/10).[3]

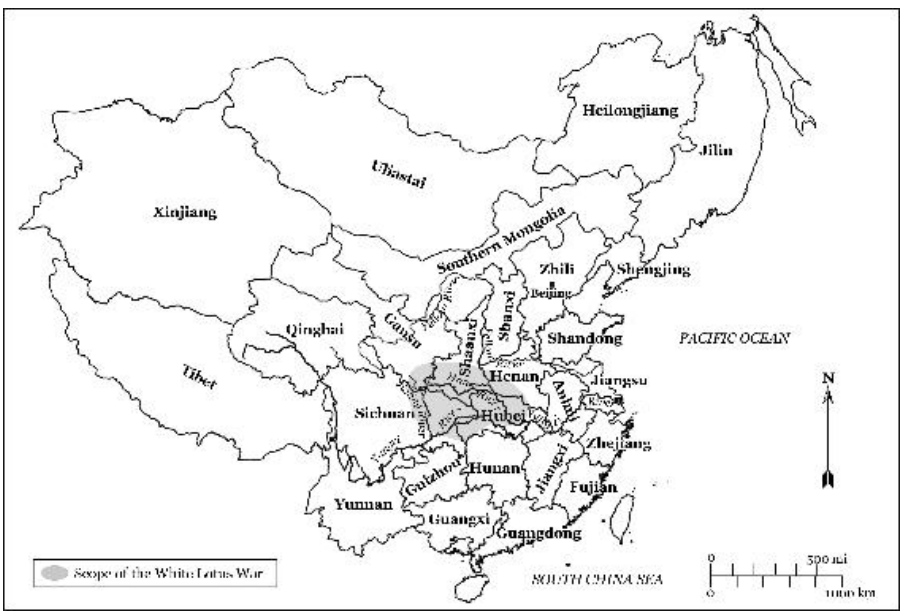
The first uprising, however, broke out in southwestern Hubei on 01/01/10, nine days after Jiaqing's ceremonial enthronement and two months ahead of the triple-dragon date, since the disclosure of the plan to the local government forced the sectarians to act early. During the following weeks, several other uprisings erupted in southwestern and northwestern Hubei (and one in central Hubei), although most of them did not last for more than a few months or even weeks. Later in the year, several uprisings took place in northeastern Sichuan and southern Shaanxi, but only the Sichuan uprisings survived 1796, and those in Shaanxi were completely extinguished in two months. Having never unified, the numerous rebel forces acted largely independently in the years to come, shuttling on the mountainous border regions

astride Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Hubei with limited coordination—on only a few occasions was a short-lived coalition formed. Contrary to the expectation of the Qing ruling elites, the suppression campaign dragged on for almost a decade, even though the total number of the insurgents had been reduced to about twenty thousand by the end of 1800 and only a few thousand after 1801. Not until the autumn of 1804 was the Qing state able to proclaim the final victory. Yet sporadic fighting against the last rebel remnants did not completely end until mid-1805. Marking the end of the Qing golden age and the beginning of troubled times, these uprisings and the Qing military campaigns to suppress them, which are referred to collectively as the White Lotus War in this study, have been treated as a watershed. (Map I.1.)

Nevertheless, this milestone event has not received scholarly attention proportional to its acknowledged significance. Until now, no monograph has been devoted exclusively to this incident in Chinese or any other language. Even during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) in China, when studying "peasant rebellions" was à la mode, few works were produced on the White Lotus War, in contrast to the many works on the Taiping Rebellion, although the two were considered the "great" peasant rebellions.[4] In the West, despite the attention paid to sectarian movements in late imperial China, only a handful of the many resulting publications are on the sectarian networks from which the White Lotus uprisings sprang.[5] There has been little attempt to recap and analyze the uprisings themselves and the Qing suppression effort.[6] One section in volume 10 of *The Cambridge History of China* and a chapter in Philip A. Kuhn's *Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China: Militarization and Social Structure, 1796–1864* have long been the major sources in English literature on the event, although neither attempts to provide a serviceable narrative.[7]

The most detailed narratives of the war are those by Wei Yuan, a nineteenth-century scholar, in *Chronicle of Imperial Military Campaigns* (Shengwuji).[8] Although devoting a great deal of coverage to the White Lotus War, Wei Yuan provides an account that is little more than a shortened version of the official chronicle of the suppression campaign compiled by a court-appointed committee in the 1800s.[9] Therefore, in Wei's version of the campaign, the Qing military, both commanders and the rank and file, fought hard against the vigorous rebel forces, so much so that the campaign stood as another great feat in the long and glorious military history of the Qing dynasty. To serve this end, Wei pruned out some contradictory facts and deemphasized or even omitted the criticisms of the commanders, often harsh and blunt, given by the Qianlong and Jiaqing emperors. To the dismay of scholars in the field of Qing studies, Wei Yuan's apologetic position

and his uncritical treatment of the wars waged by the Qing, either on its frontiers or inside the empire, have not been seriously questioned. If there is something novel in Wei's account of the White Lotus War, it is his attention to the use of militias and the policy of "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside" (*jianbi qingye*), referring to the building of forts or fortified settlements in the war zone to shelter local residents and their belongings so that the rebels were denied manpower and supplies.[10] Although he did not attribute the Qing suppression of the rebels to the two measures, his account makes clear that this campaign was innovative. Perhaps unanticipated by Wei Yuan himself, this elucidation would be resonant for over a century.



MAP I.1. The White Lotus War, 1796–1804. The marked area shows the maximum extent affected by hostilities.

Early in the twentieth century, Wei Yuan's observation was first echoed by Inaba Iwakichi, a Japanese historian, who published *A Complete History of the Qing Dynasty* (Shinchō zenshi) in 1914, a few years after the dynasty fell.[11] The first such general history, Inaba's work, however, is a hasty expansion of his scholarship on Manchu history before the conquest of China to the entire lifespan of the Qing. Discussing the White Lotus War in one of the eighty-four chapters, Inaba focused on the Qing inability to battle the insurgents, citing several important documents to prove that the Qing military had decayed because of institutional failings and corruption. Yet he

apparently did not access essential materials, including the official chronicle on which Wei Yuan had based his narratives, let alone the archives that were unavailable to the public at the time. Although he countered Wei Yuan in explicitly pointing out the decline of Qing military strength, Inaba crystallized the two tactics highlighted in Wei's *Chronicle of Imperial Military Campaigns*, arguing that the Qing had to rely on local militias and the building of forts in the countryside in order to win the campaign.[12]

Inaba's book was immediately translated into Chinese and published in Shanghai in 1915.[13] Having noticed numerous factual errors and misinterpretations in Inaba's study, Xiao Yishan, a young Qing historian, wrote another history of the Qing dynasty, *A Complete History of the Qing dynasty* (Qingdai tongshi), and published its first two volumes in the 1920s. Even though he had aimed at correcting Inaba's errors, Xiao readily adopted Inaba's points of view on the White Lotus War. Having elaborated on Inaba's analysis of the pathetic state of the Qing military, Xiao, too, points to local militias and fortification as the keys to the Qing victory.[14] In fact, Xiao did not go much further than Inaba in using primary sources in this case.

Although Xiao's Qing history surpassed Inaba's in influence in China thereafter, another Chinese scholar, Li Jiannong, helped propagate the Inaba line in both China and the West. A member of Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Alliance, Li was attending Waseda University in Japan in 1910, when Inaba was on its faculty (but Li returned to China the following year, when the revolution erupted). Although it is not clear whether the two ever met at Waseda, Li was apparently familiar with Inaba's book. In a 1930 political history of China since the late nineteenth century, Li briefly discusses the White Lotus War, restating, in a shortened version, the account in Inaba's Qing history.[15] When an updated version of Li's work was translated into English and published in 1956, the two translators, Ssu-yü Teng and Jeremy Ingalls, chose not to translate the book ad verbum to limit the size of the translation. Therefore, they condensed and rewrote the part on the White Lotus War, crystallizing the Inaba-Li line as follows:

> During the rebellion of the White Lotus Society, one great defect in Manchu power was disclosed. The standing army, consisting of the Eight Banners and the Army of the Green Standard, was already too corrupt to be of much use. Local militias were called out to suppress the rebellion.… The suppression of the White Lotus Rebellion was not carried out by the standing army, but by the local militia, who used a scorched-earth policy called "cleaning up the country," that is, leaving no food and shelter for the rebels.[16]

This simple, yet appealing, interpretation came to influence generations of scholars, directly or indirectly, and few have

questioned its origins and validity. It has been adopted by authors of general histories of both imperial China and modern China. It has served as the factual basis for some influential works. Although more and more students of Chinese history have voiced their dissatisfaction with the markedly meager scholarship on so critical an event, many still adhere to the cliché, since no alternative interpretations have replaced it.[17]

As it is impossible to dispute and depose the accepted wisdom without solid knowledge of the incident, this book offers an empirical study of the nearly one decade of conflicts between the Qing dynasty and a constellation of rebel groups. More particularly, this narrative focuses on the Qing effort in putting down the uprisings and the intricate interpersonal relationships—which were often contentious—among the Qing war leadership, consisting of both military officials and provincial officials, typically governors-general and governors, and between them and the throne. The sectarian nature of the rebellion and the repercussions of the uprisings on the sectarian movement are not the main concerns of this study. Rather, the rebels' political and military strategies and tactics will be closely observed and analyzed. The objectives of this study are threefold: reconstructing and recounting the process and the dynamics of the war, reexamining previous assertions against the historical facts, and reassessing the significance of the incident. The second and third objectives cannot be achieved without the first. Overall, this book ventures to provide a totally new interpretation of the event and its significance in late imperial Chinese history.

Contrary to the widespread belief that the White Lotus War seriously challenged the Qing dynasty—it is not uncommon for it to be dubbed the "Great White Lotus Rebellion"—as its duration, geographic scope, and costs may seem to warrant,[18] this study reveals that the uprisings that took place in western Hubei, northeastern Sichuan, and southern Shaanxi in the late 1790s were far from being formidable enough to pose a serious threat to the Qing. In fact, the rebellion's leadership was extremely fragmented and lacked promising strategic objectives from the beginning, which contrasts starkly with the much more powerful Taiping Rebellion a half century later. Although the original masterminds of the rebellion had vaguely harbored imperial ambitions—as evidenced in their choice of the dragon date to start the rebellion among other things—not only did their political agenda quickly dissipate, but the sectarian nature of the rebellion also largely faded as the conflict unfolded. Lacking skill, equipment, and coordination, the insurgents were not capable of taking on major political and economic centers in the regions where they were active. Save the first year, 1796, during which the rebels in

Hubei and Sichuan took a few county seats (but they were able to hold only one for an extended time), they hardly captured and occupied any city or sizable town (they occupied only one town for a couple of weeks after 1796) but mainly traversed the mountainous border regions astride Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Hubei, and on several occasions broke into some areas of Gansu, which were invariably sparsely populated. Contrary also to the conventional wisdom that the populace joined those uprisings owing to suppression and exaction by local officials, there was no widespread response to the uprisings other than from among sectarian communities in the first years. To swell their ranks, the insurgents constantly had to coerce the local residents to join them. By late 1800, the surviving rebels had been reduced to a handful of aimless bandit bands struggling for survival.

If it was not the strength of the rebellion that achieved the longevity of the hostilities, one would have to look into the other side in the war, the Qing military, for an answer. Contrary to the aforementioned conviction that the corrupt Qing military were no longer capable of swiftly putting down the rebellion, some Qing generals and local officials exhibited remarkable effectiveness in battling the rebels in the early stage of the campaign, so much so that most of the uprisings were completely snuffed out soon after they erupted and the rest were kept at bay. Nevertheless, many other leaders of the campaign, military and civil officials alike, were purposefully inclined to delay exterminating the insurgents. For them, what became more attractive was to take full advantage of the campaign to achieve personal gains such as promotions and material benefits, both legitimately and illegitimately. Meanwhile, personal strife within the war leadership also proved to be critical in demoralizing the generals who fought in earnest. Although the Jiaqing emperor, on taking the reins of government after the Qianlong emperor's death at the beginning of 1799, demonstrated his determination to put the derailed campaign back on track, he could not carry through his reform agenda and frequently made concessions to the war leaders. As a result, the last phase of the war to clear the rebel remnants became vexingly protracted, lasting for several years. Although the emperor urged the commanders and viceroys to bring the war to an end numerous times and victory was declared twice at the beginning of 1803 and again in autumn of that year, the conflict was resumed in the wake of each "victory." All in all, this campaign was not fought under the watch of the central government but on the field commanders' terms.

If it was the military's unwillingness, rather than incapacity, to swiftly wipe out all the rebels that accounted for the long duration of the campaign, it becomes easier to see that the two well-known tactics

—use of local militias and "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside"—do not deserve the credit that they have received. Contrary to the belief that these tactics were applied only later in the campaign when the Qing military failed to do its job, both had been in place from the start, when some of the suppressors were still effectively fighting. But neither tactic had played a critical role in the hostilities. In addition, the local elites who had helped initiate them were never on center stage, because the war authorities soon took over the leadership of both initiatives. In fact, the emphasis on those two tactics has helped obscure a notable feature of this war: that the Qing side hired hundreds of thousands of civilians to aid its operations. These civilians were referred to as *xiangyong* (lit., "village braves"), the closest equivalent of which in English is "militias," but they functioned more like mercenaries. The key difference between those hired militiamen and local militias is that the former were on the payroll of the war authorities, but local militiamen were volunteers from local communities.

The Qing military's use of such mercenaries was a new device in the late eighteenth century as a response to the Qianlong emperor's effort to cut back on ever-increasing war expenses. Having found that hiring civilians as combatants was a convenient way to circumvent the regulations on wartime spending enacted by the Qing court in the late eighteenth century, commanders exercised this practice to an extremely abusive extent in the White Lotus War. It became one of the chief reasons for the colossal financial costs of this war, as the number of hired militiamen often exceeded the number of regular troops deployed, at least on paper, and their stipends were higher than those of regular soldiers in the early stages. More critically, the war stewardship's mishandling of their demobilization was an important factor contributing to the long duration of the war, for many demobilized militiamen ended up joining the rebels, and the commanders resisted demobilizing the remaining ones. When the central government pressed for their reduction, the war leadership commandeered the local fortification projects and the local militias, and used them as excuses, in lieu of the mercenaries, to secure war funds from the central government.

The extensive use of hired civilians in the suppression campaign triggered a keen, albeit intermittent, debate among the Qing ruling elites on the reform of the existing regular military forces, which has hitherto escaped scholarly notice. Dissatisfied that the Manchu banners had become too cumbersome and expensive to deploy, while the Green Standard Army was too dispersed and localized, some proposed and rationalized the building of a new mobile military force that could easily be deployed anywhere in the empire when necessary.

The core of the reform was close to the introduction of professional soldiers to replace de facto hereditary soldiers, which was a reality in both the banners and the Green Standard Army. Although the pro-reform voices were dominant in the first half of the war, from 1796 to 1800, the Jiaqing emperor, who had shown interest in the idea of the new mobile force earlier, shifted his position to maintaining the status quo by mid-1800, in view of the possibly drastic impact on the banner system and the high financial costs if this proposal were to be given a go-ahead. Despite his deep mistrust of and disgust with the mercenaries, Jiaqing realigned himself to accept the use of the irregulars and discontinued the discussion of possible military reform. From the vantage point of history, the Qing dynasty thus missed an opportunity to restructure and strengthen its military system before it was faced with more serious challenges half a century later.

Although the Jiaqing emperor was concerned with the high costs that military reform might have entailed, he proved to be helpless when it came to reining in the outlandishly huge expenditures of the suppression campaign. The Qing system of financing wars had many loopholes that provided an optimum environment for generals and logistical officials to abuse rules and embezzle war funds. During the eighteenth century, the Qing fought many large-scale wars on its frontiers, the most expensive of which was the second Jinchuan war (1771–1776) in the western borderland of Sichuan. However, the expenses of that war, more than 60 million taels of silver, pale in comparison to the 120 million taels allegedly spent in the White Lotus War. In the latter campaign, both military commanders and local officials greedily profiteered from the war funds by using pretexts such as paying for hired militias, porters, and draft animals. Consequently, a fairly large portion of the war funds was either misused or misappropriated. The serious corruption at the war front did not go unnoticed; criticism from the civil bureaucracy was frequent throughout the campaign. In 1799, the Jiaqing emperor made a bold attempt to straighten out war finances by curtailing unnecessary expenses and embezzlement. Nevertheless, the attempt quickly backfired and was aborted when faced with strenuous resistance from the military and local governments. For the remainder of the war, the central government continued to bow to demands by the war leaders, unable to discipline them. As the central government's coffers were nearly empty, the state had to scramble for funds from both the provinces and the private sector, while cutting back other projects and practicing frugality from the capital to the provinces.

Bringing to light the comprehensive and detailed dynamics of the White Lotus War will help reassess its significance. Although the

decadelong war was a grave political crisis for the Qing state, the crisis does not lie in the fact that the state was severely challenged by rebels from the bottom of society. Instead, it was a political crisis in the sense that the Qing central government was no longer able to operate its military machine when needed. Despite the throne's repeated attempts to take back control of the war, it ended up losing the battle to generals and viceroys who imposed their own wills on the central government, hijacking the campaign to serve their own purposes. In the long run, this development served as a harbinger of the disintegration of Qing central power. For the Qing military, the repercussions of the White Lotus War were also adverse. Having lost its financial vitality in the war and fearing that it would be misled by military personnel again, the Qing state retreated to a conservative approach in funding its armies, reversing a policy that had been followed since the beginning of the dynasty in which the state held the military's welfare as a high priority. Without adequate financial support and imperial attention, the Qing military entered a sharp downturn following the White Lotus War, leaving it incapable of responding to foreign and domestic crises in just a few decades. In this light, one can see the disintegration of the Qing imperial order from a new perspective: namely, the evolution of the Qing military financial system unwittingly fostered a wartime interest group that boldly challenged the political authority of the central government and cost the state its fiscal strength. Then the state's withdrawal of its commitment to treat its military favorably deepened the plight the Qing military system had been dealing with for some time before the war.

When the rebellion started early in 1796, the Qianlong emperor was still the helmsman of the Qing dynasty, despite his abdication in favor of his fifteenth son, Yongyan. Having named himself the "supreme emperor" (*taishang huangdi*), Qianlong made no effort to conceal the fact that he had not transferred the reins of government to his son. As he publicly stated in his edict of abdication, "I cannot excuse myself from managing all important military and national affairs, and key personnel and administrative matters."[19] In fact, he presided over not only important matters, but also routine business. Consequently, the first three years of the Jiaqing reign, 1796 to 1799, turned out to be an extension of the Qianlong period, so much so that the reign name of "Qianlong" continued to be used inside the Forbidden City, as desired by the retired emperor.[20] As such, there were no ruptures in politics and policy. Nor were there any major personnel changes. The only visible difference was that Qianlong now kept the new sovereign at his side, tutoring him from dawn to dusk.

Yongyan, who was born of a concubine, was not Qianlong's favorite

son. In 1736, the year his reign began, Qianlong secretly designated Yonglian, the only son at the time by his beloved empress, Xiaoxian, as crown prince. But Yonglian died of an illness only three years after. Qianlong did not revisit the issue of his successor until 1773, and his decision then to establish Yongyan as crown prince might well have been a noncommittal one. Yet Qianlong could find no better option among his few living sons.[21] Although Yongyan might have had some inkling of his selection as crown prince, the decision was not made public until late 1795, when Qianlong proclaimed that he would abdicate the throne in the following year.[22]

Qianlong's unprecedented retirement—no Qing emperor had previously given up the throne while living—and his continuous grip on power complicated the Qianlong–Jiaqing transition. The person who was most affected was none other than Yongyan, the Jiaqing emperor. Completely dominated by his father, Jiaqing was only allowed to perform ceremonial functions and read memorials without being able to give his own responses. Nevertheless, he proved to be politically mature and shrewd. Stoic and dutiful, he managed not to betray any sign of discontent or ambition, publicly or privately, throughout the three-year apprenticeship. In so doing, not only did he win his father's approval, but he helped assure Hešen, Qianlong's leading aide and the most powerful courtier, that the new monarch had no spine to assert his own will, which prompted Hešen to act contemptuously toward him.[23]

Although widely considered to be the root as well as the face of corruption in the late Qianlong era, Hešen was in fact a consummate chief minister and aide to the Qianlong emperor. The man's dramatic rise to power was largely tied to the political circumstances of the 1770s. After Fuheng, the younger brother of the Xiaoxian empress and the chief grand councilor since the late 1740s, died in 1770, Qianlong had experienced a period of crisis during which time he had shown an erratic disposition.[24] That Qianlong found in Hešen, a palace guard, a new chief aide to whom he could turn for both state affairs and personal matters helped the emperor regain his poise and vitality. In return, Qianlong catapulted Hešen to the position of one of the leading grand councilors with numerous concurrent positions in a few years.[25] As greedy as he was in going after fortune by demanding and taking bribes and gifts from officials, Hešen was a dutiful right-hand man who assisted the emperor in curbing corruption and abuses inside and outside of the court. It may be convenient to pin Hešen down as the root cause of pervasive corruption in officialdom, but it is not helpful in fully grasping the intricate court politics in the late Qianlong period.[26]

Recent scholarship has suggested that factional struggle in the court

was behind Qianlong's fostering of Hešen. In this view, having Hešen occupy the position left by Fuheng might have served to counterbalance an entrenched clique at the court, which had been started by Akdun and Liu Tongxun, two leading court officials in the early Qianlong period.[27] Although it is sometimes difficult to draw a clear line between political cliques in the late-eighteenth-century Qing court, it is certainly sagacious to dissect the Hešen question from a moralistic perspective. On the eve of the White Lotus War, however, opposition to Hešen in the court and beyond had not reached a point of political crisis. Instead, given the unique manner in which the Qianlong–Jiaqing transition proceeded, a great deal of uncertainty and suspension overtook the court. With the inevitable on the horizon—Qianlong, albeit energetic and functional, was in his twilight years—many in the court were preoccupied with their own futures when the seemingly unassuming and reserved apprentice would eventually take over. Therefore, it was not the optimum time to upset the status quo, either by calling for reform or by intensifying any political contentions at the court. As far as this study is concerned, the Hešen question was not echoed in the sectarian agitation in the towns and villages in central China, as will be detailed below.

When he decided to retire in 1795, Qianlong must have been content that his empire was equipped with sufficient military power to cope with uprisings of any size. His dynasty possessed one of the largest standing armies in the world at the time (the banners and the Green Standard Army combined amounting to seven to eight hundred thousand men). Despite some early signs of decline, the Qing military remained a formidable and effective force at the end of the eighteenth century. In the early 1790s, in the last far-flung frontier war against Gurkha Nepal, in which the Qing expedition first marched to Tibet to expel the Gurkha invaders and then pushed into Nepal, threatening to take its capital, Kathmandu, the Qing displayed its capacity in mustering resources for a long-distance expedition in a highly inhospitable environment. Despite the heavy casualties and high financial cost, the invasion of Nepal had strongly impressed both the Gurkhas in Nepal and the British in India. Consequently, Nepal agreed to enter a tributary relationship with Qing China. Given the right commanders and circumstances, the Qing military was still able to accomplish tough tasks. However, there were innate flaws in Qing's military financial system. Over a period of time, those flaws evolved into entrenched and cancerous quandaries. Having failed to root them out, the Qing had to suffer their greatest consequences during the campaign to suppress the White Lotus rebels.

The Qing system, in compensating its military, was a dualistic one in twofold. At first, the two armies—the banners, consisting of the

Manchu, Mongol, and Chinese banners, and the Green Standard Army, whose rank and filers consisted of only Han Chinese—were compensated differently as two classes. Regarded as the elite mobile field forces, the banners were stationed only in the capital, Manchuria, and certain major cities and strategic points. The bannermen were more highly paid in their stipends, allowances, bonuses, and so forth, than the Green Standard personnel, who were stationed all over the country and shouldered the task of securing local areas. Furthermore, there was a significant gap between the military personnel's peacetime income and their wartime income. Although the regular pay to both armies had stayed almost unchanged throughout the Qing dynasty, all the troops deployed to war received compensation that was in addition to their regular pay in peacetime.[28] More important, wartime compensation proved to be much more generous and flexible and prone to abuses. As a result, military personnel who were not well satisfied with their income in peacetime would take deployments as coveted opportunities to earn extra income in addition to the opportunity for promotions and records of merit—for a bannerman, the more decorated he was, the more favorable treatment he received in his retirement. Because of this system, the standing armies bore a resemblance to mercenaries who fought for lucrative financial gains when deployed.

During the eighteenth century, the Qing waged numerous wars both on the frontier and in the interior, including protracted wars against the Zunghar Mongols in the far northwest, several invasions of Tibet, quelling of revolts on its border margins and in Taiwan, and invasions of neighboring countries such as Myanmar, Vietnam, and Nepal. Although war expenditures had been more or less kept under control in the first half of the century, in its second half, commanders were inclined to press for increasingly higher war funds by citing emergent needs at the front that were not difficult to find in a war environment. Consequently, war expenditures escalated continuously and significantly. In the 1750s, the Qing armies engaged and annihilated the mighty Zunghar kingdom in Eastern Turkestan and then subsequently put down a revolt by the Muslim chieftains there. Despite the long distance between the frontline and the interior, the total war cost in six years, 1754 to 1760, was 27 million taels.[29] However, in 1774, a one-month campaign to suppress a sectarian uprising led by Wang Lun in Shandong cost a staggering one million taels.[30] Simultaneously, the second Jinchuan war in the western marches of Sichuan to subjugate the Jiarong chieftains cost more than 60 million taels in five years, 1771 to 1776, making this war the most expensive one that the Qing had ever fought.[31]

The chief factors that had driven war expenses up in the late

eighteenth century were wartime subsidies and awards granted to soldiers and officers, and wages and bonuses paid to civilian laborers who were hired to transport supplies and matériel and build war facilities and infrastructure. Although both categories proved to be highly arbitrary and difficult to regulate, the latter, compensation to the laborers, had been more so than the former and thus costlier. During the Qing dynasty, transportation of supplies in war had evolved over time. In the beginning, it was often carried out by the armies themselves.[32] Throughout the eighteenth century, wartime logistics became increasingly open to engaging the private sector; supplies and matériel were mainly transported by hired laborers and draft animals. Not only did the troops no longer shoulder any logistical work, but they were even entitled to let hired hands carry their weapons, equipment, as well as personal belongings (in some cases they allowed themselves to be carried in sedan chairs by the laborers). In the second Jinchuan campaign, transportation costs became the lion's share of the total war expenses, even though abuses in the name of awarding soldiers were also widespread and serious.[33]

Although the Qing state had tried to regulate war expenditures before,[34] it was the huge cost of the second Jinchuan war that prompted Qianlong and his courtiers to act. In the immediate wake of the second Jinchuan campaign, Qianlong appointed an ad hoc committee, charging it to compile a set of rules to standardize criteria for wartime expenditures in order to root out wartime corruption and limit war expenditures to a reasonable scale.[35] Headed by Agūi and Hešen, the committee consisted of more than one hundred top court officials and chiefs of the three ministries that were involved in military finance, the ministries of Revenue, War, and Works. This proved to be a complex and tedious project, as the committee had to go through large volumes in the archives to ferret out precedents in all the categories of expenditures in previous wars and decide a reasonable rate for each expense, taking into consideration variables that might affect the expenses. Not until 1784, eight years after the commencement of the project, was a tripartite statute, *Imperially Sanctioned Statute of Wartime Expenditures Concerning the Ministries of Revenue, War, and Works* (Qinding Hubu Bingbu Gongbu junxu zeli; hereafter referred to as *Wartime Expenditures Statute*), promulgated. The nearly 120 articles in the statute regulated military personnel's wartime awards, subsidies, and injury and death compensation; pay to military laborers, draft animals, and professionals, such as doctors, veterinarians, artisans and so on; and the cost for acquisition of munitions and building infrastructure for operations such as road building and bridge building.[36]

Arguably a milestone in the evolution of the military financial

system of the Qing dynasty, the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* represented an earnest effort of the Qing state to resort to a legislative approach to reining in ever-increasing war expenses. Although this statute sanctioned some unofficial practices and expedients that had been created and followed in previous wars—given that many of the chief compilers themselves were well known for taking advantage of war to squeeze more funding from the state—it outlawed some of the most abusive practices, including the notorious *shanghao* (material for awards), an unofficial practice in which commanders used war funds to purchase material, usually silks and satins, to give to the troops as awards, sometimes simply giving silver, and meticulously stipulated all the expenditures that had occurred in previous wars, leaving much less room for the military and the civil officials who managed war logistics to appropriate funds. Moreover, it empowered the civil bureaucracy to render surveillance of military spending. Officials in the Ministry of Revenue would cite the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* in the auditing of war expenses when they saw any uncharacteristic expenses. In fact, Hešen, when supervising the ministry, was stringent in adhering to the statute, relentlessly slashing unsupported or excessive claims.

Yet the new code did not eliminate the gap between the banners and the Green Standard Army in wartime compensation. Instead, it further confirmed and even increased bannermen's wartime benefits. For instance, whereas the Green Standard soldiers were entitled to only 6 taels of "outfit allowance" (*xingzhuangyin*), a subsidy paid to the deployed troops in the name of preparing their outfit and equipment, ordinary bannermen from Manchuria were entitled 40 taels (Manchu bannermen from the capital received 20 taels and bannermen stationed in provinces received 15 taels).[37] As a result, it became more expensive and burdensome to deploy the banner forces to wars. In fact, with the empire's frontiers largely secured after the demise of the Zunghar Mongols, the Qing state became less willing to use bannermen. In the edict to launch the project of compiling the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* in the middle of 1776, Qianlong blamed Shandong authorities for mishandling the suppression campaign against the Wang Lun uprising. He reasoned that this campaign was only aimed at "clearing bandits in an interior area," but the officials who led the logistical services mistakenly treated it as a major war. Clearly, from Qianlong's perspective, a war against internal revolt should not necessitate the deployment of the elite bannermen, thus entailing more expense.[38] After the enactment of the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, Qianlong went further; he was hesitant to deploy the banner forces in frontier wars for the remainder of his reign. During the invasion of Gurkha Nepal, of 15,000 to 16,000 expedition

forces, only 1,100 were bannermen (100 *baturu* and 1,000 Solon soldiers) from Manchuria, but the rest were Green Standard troops and ethnic soldiers of western Sichuan and Tibet.[39] Referred to as "native soldiers" or "barbarian soldiers" (*tubing* or *fanbing*), the ethnic soldiers were the armed forces of the non-Han communities in the northwestern and southwestern borderlands. Inexpensive but effective, the ethnic soldiers had been deployed by the Qing state before, but the practice became more institutionalized in the last decades of the Qianlong era.

The Qing reluctance to use its elite army inevitably placed the Green Standard Army, its second-tier forces, in the fore. As designated by the founding fathers of the Qing dynasty, the Green Standard Army was not supposed to function as a mobile striking force but be used to secure the local area, although its units were frequently deployed with the banner force.[40] Like that of the banners, the pay to all the members of the Green Standard Army had been basically unchanged since the beginning of the dynasty. While the bannermen had enjoyed many occasional awards from the emperor, the Green Standard personnel, especially soldiers, had sustained greater economic hardship. During a stretch of about five decades in the eighteenth century, owing to the initiative by the Yongzheng emperor (r. 1723–1735) to provide capital funds to both the banners and the Green Standard Army for them to invest in business, the Green Standard troops could count on the profits earned to subsidize the occasions of marriage and death, the costliest events in their lives. However, Qianlong abolished the practice in 1781, instead allocating 1 million taels per year in addition to the regular military budget to meet those needs of the soldiers. In the same year, Qianlong also abolished Green Standard officers' "military personnel stipends" (*wuzhi mingliang*), a de facto extra income for the officers, and granted them instead the "silver to nourish virtue" (*yanglianyin*), a favor previously restricted to civil officials. For this move, the Qing state would pay another 2 million taels a year.[41] Clearly, Qianlong tried to alleviate the Green Standard personnel's peacetime predicament by providing some guaranteed funds for both officers and rank and filers.

Nevertheless, those measures did not achieve the effects Qianlong had envisioned. The 1 million taels allocated for soldiers' subsidies were not all delivered into their hands, with many of the funds dissipated when traveling through the military bureaucracy. The extension of the "silver to nourish virtue" to military officials did not deter them from preying on the soldiers, either. Instead of using their new allowance to hire household personnel, such as valets, cooks, sedan chair carriers, artisans, handymen, horse tenders, instrumentalists, and so on, many officers pocketed the money and

continued appropriating soldiers' stipends to pay for their personal needs. In a widespread practice referred to as "eating the empty rosters" (*chikonge*), officers concealed vacancies from their superiors and pocketed the stipends themselves. With numerous "straw soldiers" on the army's rosters, the actual size of the Green Standard Army had shrunk well under its theoretical size of six hundred thousand. According to the military household system that the Qing inherited from the Ming dynasty, soldiers' offspring were supposed to be given priority when vacancies became available. However, competition to gain a position became keener in the late eighteenth century, when population growth enlarged the candidate pool; bribery was therefore commonplace. Then the situation worsened when the state allowed Manchu bannermen who could not obtain a position in the banner system to be enlisted with the Green Standard Army.[42] Meanwhile, society at large had become much wealthier. The abundance of luxuries and the multiplication of entertainment venues could only aggravate the dismay and dislocation of the military personnel.

Despite the attention paid by the central government to military personnel's well-being, a fundamental overhaul of the military financial system was apparently out of the question, as the circumstances in the late eighteenth century did not produce sufficient urgency to necessitate and justify the potentially risky step, which would entail momentous and complicated consequences. Yet, the throne was clearly aware of the financial predicament of the military personnel, despite his desire to rein in wartime expenditures. On the several occasions when the military forces were mobilized for war after the promulgation of the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, the Qianlong emperor was inclined to provide his troops with some financial incentives. Inasmuch as the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* was aimed at providing only the criteria for the auditing of war expenses, which usually took place after a war ended, it offered no guidance for allocating the funds for the action. Therefore, funding wars was still up to the emperor. In addition, there was no mechanism for the Ministry of Revenue to question or hinder the allocations requested by the throne. Once the funds were allocated and sent to the front, it was not too difficult for the commanders and logistical administrators to figure out ways to circumvent the rules in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* in order to survive the scrutiny by the Ministry of Revenue in the audit. The best bet seemed to be creating new excuses that had not been regulated by the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* but allowed ample room for manipulation. In the White Lotus War, the generous financial support given by the central government and the peculiar circumstances of coping with the rebels' guerrilla warfare fired up war-front corruption, making the campaign the most scandalous one

in Qing history.

Far away from the Forbidden City, the lower worlds had their own concerns, obsessions, and rhythms of action. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, sectarianism had been gaining tremendous momentum. Compared with the earlier Qing dynasty, the Qianlong period merits being regarded as the "golden age" of sectarian piety. More than one hundred new sects emerged, even though many were evanescent, and the geographic scope of the sectarian activities extended to most parts of the country.[43] Meanwhile, new sectarian tenets were developed, and large quantities of scriptures (*jing*) and sacred books (*baojuan*) were compiled, printed, and circulated. Their organizational techniques and means of propagation became more mature and diversified.[44] Despite their varied names, the term "White Lotus" was used by both the authorities and many sectarians as an umbrella name to refer to most of those sects (but some sects intentionally avoided it).[45] Why was there such a surge of sectarian piety in this time? Ultimately, this is also a question about the roots of the White Lotus War, given that the rebellion sprang, in the first place, from the sprawling sectarian movement of the late Qianlong period. Contrary to the conventional wisdom with regard to the origins of the rebellion, which has emphasized social ills and the dislocation of a portion of the population, evidence suggests that the remarkable growth of sectarianism reflects instead the increased level of wealth among the populace. The key to understanding this dynamic lies in the economic dimensions of the sectarian movement.

In the existing scholarship on sectarianism in late imperial China, predominant attention has been given to its faith and doctrines and, to a lesser extent, its organizational fabrics and networks, but the economics of the sects have not been carefully investigated.[46] Nevertheless, the financial mechanism was an integral part of sectarianism; almost all the sects had financial schemes and depended on the income from membership dues and charges for religious services to survive and thrive. Of a variety of fees collected from sectarian members and clients, one of the most important and common charges was the induction due. Referred to as "foundation money" (*genjiqian*) by many sects, this was the payment upon a person's induction into a sect. Although it is not possible to trace the rates of the induction dues of all the different sects, the limited records show that the amounts were not negligible.[47] Besides this onetime charge, numerous other fees and financial obligations were required of members and the faithful, which varied from sect to sect. The faithful had to pay for services such as the recital of scripture or mantras; materials used in religious ceremonies such as paper, incense, and candles; the travel costs of practitioners; gifts in cash to

masters and teachers for services and on special occasions such as festivals; and so on. Given that the primary reasons for people to be attracted to sectarian teachings were to avoid disasters, illnesses, and misfortune in this life and to ascend to Heaven in the afterlife, many sects claimed that they could help those people to achieve their goals by charging fees. A common practice was for teachers to write a name and other personal information on a piece of yellow paper—sometimes also the amount of money the client had paid—and to burn it while reciting some scriptures. This way, the deities would provide their blessings and protection to the person whose name was on the yellow paper. The charge for this service was often called "silver for passing one's name to the supernatural beings" (*shengdanyin* or *dadanyin*). Resembling the sale of "indulgences" by the Catholic Church, the sects also sold passes for the afterlife, the so-called passport in the realm of the dead (*yinzhao*), which were said to help possessors be exempted from the agonizing tortures of hell. In addition, some sects also sold printed scriptures, song lyrics, flyers, and various coupons to the faithful.[48]

In theory, the income from all the charges was used as the sects' operational funds, covering the costs of religious facilities and materials, and serving as relief and charity funds for members and the neighborhood. In reality, however, the funds were solely controlled by the masters and teachers, who often had one or several financial managers to keep the money and accounts for them. As the records suggest, some sectarian leaders had sizable funds at their disposal. Among other things, they spent money on litigation and ransom when their members were involved in lawsuits or arrested and to dispatch agents to visit and give subsidies to sectarians who had been convicted and exiled to the remote frontiers. In addition to the spending on behalf of their sects, sectarian chiefs lived off their sects' funds, traveling from one sectarian enclave to another and spending at will for themselves, their families, and their associates.[49] To be sure, there were sectarian teachers who were genuine believers—many among the leaders of the White Lotus uprisings in 1796 fall into this category—but there is no doubt that others treated religious practice as a livelihood, a potentially lucrative albeit dangerous one. By selecting prospective clients to proselytize—it was only logical for them not to primarily go after the destitute or lumpenproletariat who struggled to make ends meet—they gave the sectarian movement a business dimension. Although the majority of the faithful were not from the upper classes and many were not affluent, they were not the impoverished either. Given that the populace as a whole had become much wealthier than earlier in the dynasty, even the lower classes could afford to pay for their religious needs. This does not mean that

people took care of their religious needs only after they had met their subsistence needs, for religious zeal could often result from dire conditions. However, the outgrowth of sectarianism in the late eighteenth century did not only result from such religious needs, but also from the calculated endeavors of sectarian professionals.

Not only was the collecting of induction dues and other fees essential to the financial well-being of the sects and their chiefs, but it was also used as enticement in recruiting new members. Many masters promised prospective members that they could recruit their own disciples only a short period after they themselves were inducted. The quick shift in the new recruits' position in the sectarian hierarchy enabled them to collect money from others, which would have served as an important incentive for some to join a sectarian society. Inasmuch as the disciples were obligated to submit a portion of their income from charging their own inductees to their teachers, some would want to break with their teachers and create new sects. The duplicating of the master-disciple relationship was an important factor contributing to the mushrooming of sectarian societies in the late eighteenth century. This dynamic in turn led to many similarities in doctrine, scriptures, and rituals between the parent sects and their child sects.

In the official records of the Qing dynasty, both the throne and officials consistently pointed to the economic motive in sectarian activities. The terms used are *lianqian* (exacting money) and *guhuo pianqian* (bamboozling [people] out of money). Though the authorities were inclined to downplay the genuine religious thirst among the populace, they were right to grasp the economic dimension of the sectarian movement. Indeed, some self-styled sectarian teachers were more economically motivated than faithfully inspired. Although case studies are needed to further illuminate the role of economics in the expansion and evolution of sectarianism, it is certain that the flow of money in and out of the sectarian networks was in significantly large quantities. In other words, a wealthier population in lieu of a population deprived of basic means constituted the social foundation of the expansion of sectarianism in the late eighteenth century.

In the limited scholarship on the White Lotus War, there seems to be a consensus that the rebellion resulted, at least partially, from increasingly acute distress and crises in society. Although sectarian agitation has been recognized as a factor, social issues have usually been counted as more important.[50] At first glance, this perception seems to hold. Throughout the eighteenth century, the rapid population growth in the country had led to serious shortages of arable land, rendering large numbers of people landless and thus without stable livelihoods. In the late Qianlong period, millions of

such people moved away from their hometowns, searching for opportunities elsewhere. In central China, the two mountain ranges—the Qinling Mountains running through southern Shaanxi and the Daba Mountains on the borders between Sichuan and Shaanxi extending to northwestern Hubei—had become destinations for migrants. By the end of the eighteenth century, the new settlers in these mountain areas amounted to hundreds of thousands, perhaps over one million. Referred to as "shed people" (*pengmin*) in the Qing records, owing to their crude residences, many of them were attracted to sectarianism.[51] In scholarship produced throughout the twentieth century, the two mountain ranges, together referred to as the "Han River highlands," have been regarded as the hotbed of the White Lotus War, and the shed people have been believed to be backbone of the rebellion. Not only have Marxian historians fully embraced this interpretation of the causes of the rebellion; it has maintained its appeal beyond the Marxian camp, resonating up to the present.[52]

Nevertheless, the shed people in southern Shaanxi were not the mainstay of the rebel forces. In fact, most of the shed people had found livelihoods on this rugged interior frontier. Many settled down as farmers, reclaiming open land in the mountains and creating new villages or living in isolated cabins.[53] Meanwhile, many others were employed in the numerous plants set up in the mountains by businessmen from the nearby provinces, chiefly Shanxi and Hubei. Ranging from logging to paper making to edible fungus raising, those plants accommodated large numbers of the newcomers. The more entrepreneurial-minded started their own businesses, becoming either shop owners or long-distance traders.[54] Although their lives were not affluent and many drifted from one odd job to another, some resorting to banditry and other unlawful means for survival, it is not historically accurate to contend that this group as a whole had confronted a serious subsistence crisis by the end of eighteenth century.[55] When the rebellion started in early 1796, the major venues of uprisings were in western Hubei, where the participants were mostly property owners, either farmers or small businessmen. The composition of the sectarian membership in southern Henan was similar, although sectarian agitations did not result in open uprisings. In southern Shaanxi, only a few small uprisings took place in Xing'an prefecture at the end of 1796. All of them were swiftly and completely crushed by the garrison forces summoned from within the province. After that, only once in early 1797 were a large number of sectarian followers swayed to join the rebellion when the rebels from Hubei passed through southern Shaanxi. In the remainder of the protracted conflict, various insurgent groups shuttled about both banks of the Han River and moved in and out of the Qinling Mountains numerous times. However, the rebels

had no marked success in recruiting new blood there, even though some local residents were not particularly hostile toward the rebels. Among all the White Lotus rebels, only a tiny minority was from Shaanxi. Suffice it to say, a dominant majority of those new settlers in the Han River highlands did not embrace the rebellion with open arms.[56]

In contrast to southern Shaanxi, where most migrants had found new livelihoods, overpopulation had long caused the deterioration of social order in Sichuan. Lured by opportunities, real and imagined, large numbers of migrants had moved to Sichuan throughout the eighteenth century.[57] By the late Qianlong period, not only had the fertile Chengdu plain been fully inhabited, but also the mountainous areas in eastern and southern Sichuan, leaving mountain slopes and hills covered with small and irregular-sized farmland. As migrants continued heading to the generally wealthy province, the number of jobless drifters drastically increased, and banditry became a natural choice for many. The Guolu, a bandit group that might have been formed during the Yongzheng period and was largely expanded during the late Qianlong period, posed a serious threat to social order, as its members resorted to looting and kidnaping for ransom. Meanwhile, beggars in large numbers roamed around, storming weddings and funerals, and forcefully extorting handouts. In the early 1780s, Fuk'anggan was appointed Sichuan's governor-general and charged with cracking down on the bandits. During his two-year tenure, Fuk'anggan took draconian measures against the bandits including imposing numerous capital punishments.[58] Yet the situation did not seem to change for the better.

Besides the bandits and beggars, Sichuan's wealth and high level of commercialization helped stimulate two other illicit activities, salt smuggling and counterfeiting. In the late Qianlong period, the increase in salt prices caused decreases in salt sales, forcing many salt workshops in Sichuan to shut down. Having lost their jobs, many former employees of those workshops turned to smuggling salt for a living, enlarging the existing crowd of salt smugglers in the province to tens of thousands. As the transportation of the salt from Jiangsu to its designated sale districts in central China had usually been slow, the salt smugglers of Sichuan readily filled the gap by shipping salt to southern Shaanxi and western Hubei. In the 1780s, the illicit sale of Sichuan salt in its neighboring provinces, especially Hubei, aroused the attention of the throne. Despite the constant urging of the central government to Sichuan's authorities to tackle the problem, little progress was made in the remainder of the Qianlong period. Meanwhile, the counterfeiting of devalued copper coins (*xiaoqian*) became widespread in Sichuan. Although counterfeiting had been

rampant in many provinces, it was particularly serious in Sichuan, Guizhou, and Yunnan, for they had easier access to copper—most copper needed for minting in the country at the time was mined in Yunnan. In the last decade of the Qianlong reign, the continuous crackdown on counterfeiting sent more people to join the crowds of outlaws as they were desperate to grasp any opportunities for survival.[59]

Despite the existence of large numbers of marginal elements, the sectarian movement in Sichuan did not cross paths with them until shortly before the uprisings in late 1796. In northeastern Sichuan (Baoning, Dazhou, Taiping, and Kuizhou prefectures or subprefectures), the sectarian networks had first been set up by preachers from Hubei, thus becoming the outskirts of the sectarian diocese centered on Hubei's Xiangyang. However, they evolved on their own thereafter, bringing into being some local characteristics (for example, instead of using white cloth for their ceremonial costumes, the sectarians in Dazhou were clad in black). As in Hubei and Henan, the sectarian teachers in Sichuan did not proactively recruit the outlaws. On the contrary, the core of their followers consisted of the well-to-do or property owners, and some of the sectarian chiefs were extremely wealthy. Not until they were preparing for the rebellion did the chiefs open their doors to the outlaws and take bandits, beggars, salt smugglers, counterfeiters, and so on, under their wing. The fact that the confluence between the two cohorts did not occur naturally and early corroborates the fact that the sectarian movement did not grow out of impoverishment. Although the insurgents could recruit the marginals to swell their ranks once the uprisings erupted in Sichuan, the same pool also supplied manpower to the suppressors when the latter organized militias and recruited laborers to serve the armies, which quickly drained the feeding ground to the rebellion. After the first wave of uprisings in 1796, coercion was the chief method for the insurgents to acquire new blood in Sichuan.

If a subsistence crisis was not the driving force for the eruption of the rebellion, its cause can only be sought from within sectarianism. During their long evolution from before the Mongol invasion to Qing times, the White Lotus teachings had become an amalgam of Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Manichaeism, and other elements, although the Buddhist influence on their tenets and rituals remained strongest.[60] In the mid-Ming period, the sectarian movement underwent vigorous growth, largely thanks to the intellectual ferment of the time.[61] Since then, numerous sects had come to adopt "the home of true emptiness and the eternal father and mother" (*zhenkongjiaxiang, wushengfumu*) as their main tenets. "The home of

true emptiness" literally meant both where people came from and where they eventually go but really suggested the destined return to paradise in the afterlife. "The eternal father and mother" became their main deities among many others, but many sects later replaced "the eternal father and mother" with "the eternal venerable mother" (*wushenglaomu*).[62] The shift corresponded with the elevation of women's position in the sectarian movement, although sectarian societies had been open to women from the beginning.[63] It was not uncommon for sectarian chiefs to be women, especially widows. Some sects even consisted exclusively of women. Another new and important addition to the sectarian tenets was the emphasis on Maitreya Buddha, the Buddha of the future. As denoted in the cult of Maitreya Buddha, the existing political order and authority must be denied in order to clear the path for a completely new era, which ushered a political dimension into the largely peaceful and nonconfrontational sectarian movement, making it potentially subversive.[64] Over time, some sects injected more articulated eschatology into the cult of Maitreya Buddha, which included the doctrine on the descending of the Buddha to the earth to claim his new regime. Not surprisingly, this often led to plotting rebellion.

Nevertheless, most sects had, consciously or unconsciously, tried not to go further with the millenarian propensity brought in by the cult of Maitreya Buddha. In contrast to the Ming dynasty, during which numerous uprisings and periods of unrest were agitated by sectarians, during the Qing dynasty there were not as many such incidents before 1796—the only major uprising was that led by Wang Lun in Shandong's Linqing in 1774.[65] Among other things, the constant vigilance exhibited by the Qing state had proved effective. Throughout Qing times, the state had been updating its laws against sectarianism, which were anything but lenient.[66] Whenever the authorities were informed of a sectarian society, they stormed its enclave, arrested its members, and punished them by whipping, imprisonment, exile, and execution. From 1788, convicted sectarians had been exiled to places in Xinjiang where most of the residents were Muslims, for it seemed unlikely that they could spread their faith among the Muslims.[67] The state was also aware of the pervasiveness of popular religion, recognizing that it was difficult to weed out all the sectarian societies. More important, it feared that severe persecution might backfire. Therefore, the Qing also applied flexibility and appeasement now and then. In 1791, when a sectarian society was exposed and persecuted in Shandong, Qianlong made it clear that he did not wish to harshly punish all implicated in each and every sectarian case if their activities only involved practicing a vegetarian diet, reciting scriptures, and extracting money from the faithful, while

not overtly conveying any subversive messages.[68] To an extent, there was a tacit understanding between the state and the sects on where the line was drawn. However, it was ultimately up to the state to determine how tough it wanted to be in dealing with the sectarians, which caused tremendous uncertainties in the interplay between the state and the sects.[69]

Nevertheless, this study focuses not on the question of why the uprisings happened in the 1790s but on why the Qing did not or could not put them down quickly once they broke out. Therefore, unlike many other studies on late imperial Chinese political history, this one does not emphasize the dichotomy between state and society. Instead, it focuses on division within the "state."[70] The simple truth that the Qing military was an important organ of the state and that it carried out the state's will to eliminate the rebels in the White Lotus War does not preclude attention to the contention and conflict between this particular state apparatus and the state as a whole. The ad hoc wartime authorities, comprising high-ranking military officials and senior provincial officials, who had been given responsibility to either direct the campaign or be in charge of logistical affairs took full advantage of the war to serve their own interests. In order to maximize their gains, they, functioning as a wartime interest group, adeptly put pressure on the central government, forcing the latter to follow their timetable in conducting the campaign and to endorse their way of consuming war funds. The struggle between the central government and the war stewardship was thus more decisive than the fight between the Qing forces and the rebels when it came to the duration and cost of this war. Meanwhile, conflicts among the war leaders, along lines of moral principle or personal relationship, further entangled the intricate and intriguing politics of the wartime interest group. Although the conflict was sometimes between "corrupt" officials and "upright" ones, it was sometimes more personal, transcending political and ethical orientation. Inconsistent and undetermined, the Jiaqing emperor failed, ultimately, to discipline his war leaders and oblige them to put the dynasty's interest ahead of their own, despite taking some draconian measures.

Given the scarcity of secondary literature on the event, this book is predominantly based on primary sources. The reason for the limited scholarship on the White Lotus War is not a lack of sources. In fact, the enormity of the primary sources tends to discourage researchers. One of the most important sources for studying the campaign against the White Lotus rebels is a huge compendium compiled by the Qing court immediately after the campaign, *Imperially Sanctioned Chronicle of the Campaign to Suppress the Heretical Bandits in Three Provinces* (Qinding jiaoping sansheng xiefei fanglüe), which contains nearly two

thousand memorials and a slightly smaller number of edicts concerning the war and other Qing suppression efforts. In photoprint form it has sixty-nine volumes and totals more than 27,000 pages. Although many of the original memorials are extant, housed either in Taipei's Palace Museum or in Beijing's Number One Historical Archives, the compendium has preserved the entirety of the Qing records directly related to the event. In other words, documents for which original copies have been lost can be accessed only in this compendium.[71] In addition, several other compendia that have been published in recent years, such as the archives' collection of the Jiaqing emperor's edicts and his daily chronicle, are important for this study. Needless to say, records authored by the rebels are few and likely no longer extant.[72] However, dozens of transcripts of interrogations of captured insurgents are extant, many of which are housed in the Number One Historical Archives in Beijing and were published in China in the early 1980s.[73] This study has made full use of those transcripts, the so-called confessions (*zishu*). To reconstruct the dynamics of the war and contest stereotypes based on lack of in-depth examination of the primary sources, there is no shortcut to conducting a thorough examination of the extant materials. To be sure, the official correspondence and documents contain numerous exaggerations, distortions, fabrications, and propaganda. Still, combing through them has led to many discoveries and revelations.

CHAPTER 1

REBELLION
1796–1797

After you departed from the "soul mountain," stuck lost at home,
It has been excruciatingly painful living in this "endurance world";
The Eternal Venerable Mother has sent in a message:
"You are personally invited to return to the true home."

—LIU ZHIXIE

ALTHOUGH most sects did not include eschatology in their teaching, which typically included a violent phase of destruction of the existing world order, those that did were often especially alluring to prospective members. Given the increasingly keen competition among sects, some sectarian teachers could not resist incorporating explicit eschatological prophecy in their teaching, even though they were clearly aware that the consequence of this could be capital punishment. Surveillance at the local level could be porous, however, given the thin bureaucratic network, and this allowed spatial and temporal latitude for sectarian communities to emerge, expand, fission, and compete with each other before their activities were detected by the authorities. More than two decades before the eruption of the White Lotus War, the founding of a new sect, Hunyuan, set in motion the long and complicated trajectory that led to the decision to rebel on a triple-dragon day in 1796.

However, the insurgents failed to wait until the set date. Two months before the auspicious day and only days after the Jiaqing emperor's inauguration, a wave of uprisings broke in western Hubei, bringing spasms of shock and alarm to the Forbidden City. For the Qing dynasty, quelling multiple uprisings simultaneously in its heartland would test its authority and, more specifically, its military system's strength and efficacy. As it turned out, most of those

uprisings in Hubei were short-lived. Within half a year, the Qing forces put down most of them and forced the biggest rebel force from the Xiangyang area out of the province. By early 1797, Hubei was largely at peace. Eight months after the first uprising in Hubei, several uprisings erupted in northeastern Sichuan, which were followed by several others in southeastern Shaanxi. Like their counterparts in Hubei, those uprisings in Sichuan and Shaanxi did not seem to pose real challenges to the Qing dynasty. All the uprisings in Shaanxi were quickly put down. And the Sichuan rebels were on the edge of being annihilated by the summer of 1797.

Nevertheless, the conflicts were to continue long beyond 1797 and become the costliest war since the Qing conquest of China. To be sure, the rebels were remarkably resilient, and the extensive sectarian networks in Hubei, Shaanxi, and Sichuan were vital feeding grounds for the rebellion in this phase. More critical to the drawing out of the rebellion was, however, the way the Qing forces conducted the suppression campaign. Although a few Qing generals were effective, most exhibited a disinclination to bring the rebellion to a swift end. Outraged by the inadequate performance of the campaign's first commander-in-chief, Yongbao, the Qianlong emperor dismissed him at the end of 1796, which presaged a troubled war with little hope of being promptly concluded.

THE ROAD TO REBELLION

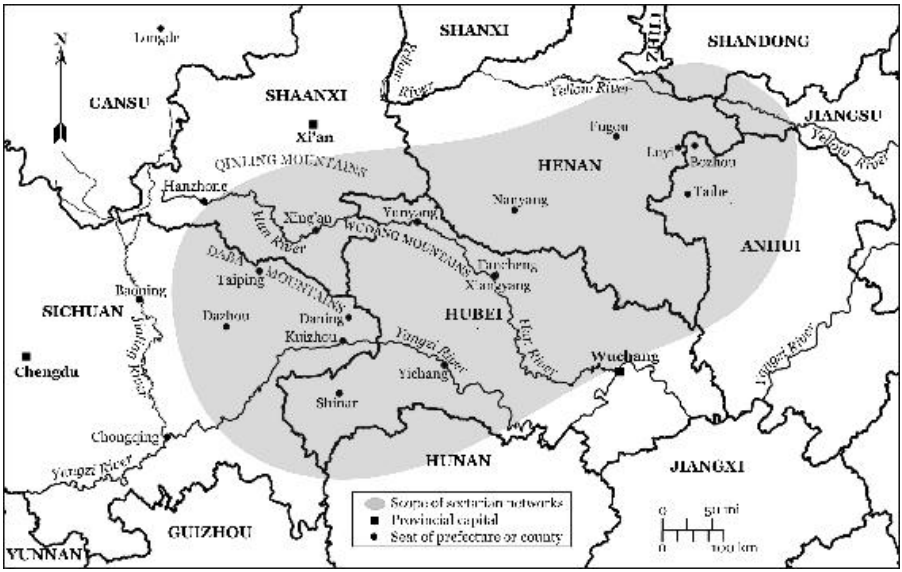
In 1774, Fan Mingde, a native of Henan's Luyi county, was converted to a sectarian teaching tainted with eschatological prophecy. Fan had been a farmer but also practiced medicine. When he fell ill himself in early 1774, a mutual friend recommended Yang Ji, a sectarian, to treat his illness. After having allegedly cured Fan, Yang urged Fan to join him in practicing his religion in order to receive a favorable reincarnation after death. Fan Mingde embraced Yang's preaching and started burning incense and reciting the scriptures given to him by Yang. When Yang passed away not long after, Fan created a sect and named it "Hunyuan," or "Primal Chaos," after the title of one of the two scriptures he had received from Yang, "Sutra of Transforming the Primal Chaos" (Hunyuan dianhua jing). Fan set up several days a year for his followers to gather at his home and recite the scriptures as well as mantras he composed himself. As in many other sects, Fan allowed his disciples to induct their own followers. One year later, the fledgling sect had expanded across the provincial border to Anhui's Bozhou department.[1] (Map 1.1.)

However, in the spring of 1775, the sect appeared on the local authorities' radar, and a crackdown ensued. Still suffering the

aftershocks of the uprising by Wang Lun in the previous year, the Qianlong emperor was especially alarmed by the eschatological messages in Fan's scriptures. In addition to the mention of the "year of the end" (*mojienian*), there were phrases such as "to change the universe" (*huan qiankun*), "to change the world" (*huan shijie*), and "year of revolt" (*fanluannian*). On Qianlong's order to round up all the members of this dangerous sect, Fan Mingde and nearly one hundred people were arrested in Luyi and Bozhou. Shortly later, Fan was executed by "a thousand cuts" (*lingchi*),[2] and a dozen others, including several of Fan's relatives, were also executed. Yang Ji's grave was ordered to be opened and his corpse destroyed.[3] Liu Song, one of Fan's disciples, and Wang Faseng, the son of Wang Huaiyu, another key member of the sect, both of Luyi, were exiled to Gansu's Longde. But Wang Huaiyu managed to escape the manhunt.[4]

In 1777, several Hunyuan members in Bozhou, with Ding Hongdu as their mastermind, revived the sect, believing that the sect was no longer within the purview of the authorities. During this stint, the sect spread to Shandong. In 1782, their activities were again detected by the local government. A new persecution was carried out, in which Ding and several dozens of its members were arrested and sentenced to either death or exile.[5] After the crackdown, the Hunyuan sect became largely dormant in the border areas astride Henan's Luyi, Anhui's Bozhou, and Shandong's southwestern corner, although some of its followers persevered in their beliefs and conducted activities clandestinely. Wang Huaiyu, in whose name Ding had collected dues, again survived the persecution and remained in hiding.

Outside the birthplace and original perimeter of the Hunyuan sect, the sect was kept alive by Liu Zhixie. Probably born in 1740, Liu Zhixie was a native of Anhui's Taihe county, more than 50 miles to the south of Luyi, and a dealer in cotton. A member of the Hunyuan sect who had been inducted by Liu Song (the two were not related despite sharing a family name), Liu Zhixie had survived the 1775 and 1782 persecutions, as Liu Song did not reveal Zhixie to the authorities in 1775, and Zhixie was not involved in the sect's revival led by Ding Hongdu. After Liu Song's arrest, Zhixie continued reciting the scriptures to the faithful and collecting money for the service, although he added a prefix to the sect's name, making it "Qingjing Hunyuan Jiao," or the "Tranquil Primal Chaos sect." Traveling widely as required by his business, Zhixie made numerous sorties to Fancheng, a town across from Xiangyang, the major commercial hub in northwestern Hubei. Beyond the Xiangyang area, he also practiced in southern Henan, gaining a following and building some enclaves along the border between Henan and Hubei.[6]



MAP 1.1. Spread of the Hunyuan and Shouyuan Sects in Central China. Also shown are the key locations in the development of the two sects up to 1795.

Eager to expand his adherents further, Zhixie took a risky step. In the spring of 1788, he trekked to Longde and visited Liu Song, who had served his exile there for thirteen years, running a grocery store for living.[7] At their meeting, the two Lius decided to change the sect's name from Hunyuan to Sanyang—"Three Yang"—in order to arouse the interest of prospective converts. In addition, they changed the title of one of the scriptures and settled on using more cryptic mantras and ballads in their sermons.[8] Most significant, Zhixie masterminded the intensification of the sect's millenarian agenda. Although the scriptures of the Hunyuan sect repeatedly mentioned the "end" of the world and drastic and violent transformation, the messages had been vague, so much so that Fan Mingde insisted during his interrogation that the language referred to natural disasters. To make the new sect more apocalyptic and thus more appealing, Zhixie suggested designating Liu Song's son, Liu Sier, who had joined his father in exile in 1783, as the incarnation of Maitreya Buddha. His mission on earth was to assist "Niu Ba," allegedly a descendant of the Ming imperial family (the combination of the characters *niu* 牛and *ba* 八 forms the character Zhu 朱, the family name of the Ming emperors). With Maitreya Buddha now on earth, it became unequivocal that the great catastrophe that would bring an end to the world was forthcoming and that immediate action was required in order to survive. The only path to salvation, in the package the two Lius created for the new teaching, was to join their sect. One of the ballads used by Zhixie in

his sermons reads as follows:

> After you departed from the "soul mountain," stuck lost at home,
> It has been excruciatingly painful living in this "endurance world";
> The Eternal Venerable Mother has sent in a message:
> "You are personally invited to return to the true home."[9]

"Return to the true home" was a potent allegory, implying a rebirth into paradise. When forcefully preached, it could orient the faithful to the unavoidable bloodbath when the destined catastrophe took place. Therefore, the new sect, Sanyang, represented a rupture from its older version, Hunyuan, ushering in an intensely subversive agenda. However, in 1788, neither of the two Lius envisaged its snowball effect. Most likely, neither of them intended to stage a rebellion at that moment. In other words, the new sect's political dimension mainly stemmed from its eschatology rather than antipathy toward the Qing. Unlike the Han Chinese nationalists before them or the anti-Manchu rebels of the mid-nineteenth century, Liu Zhixie and his counterparts did not show any signs of indignation against the Qing. Nor did they pay attention to the political and social problems of their times, which had been in the thoughts of many concerned contemporaries in officialdom and among the literati, such as Hešen's domination, rampant corruption, and the growth of the destitute in society. Therefore, the invoking of the Ming was necessitated by the sect's millenarian doctrine rather than stemming from political aspirations of the sect's creators. Judging from what would unfold in sectarian communities in the years to come, Zhixie's initiative to revamp the sect might have been more of a business decision than a political one. In other words, he would have been mostly concerned with expanding the membership of the sect, which would in turn generate more income for the sect and himself.[10]

Interestingly, Wang Faseng, who had lived in Liu Song's neighborhood after he was exiled to Longde in 1776, was not invited to the meeting between the two Lius. Having managed to escape the authorities' detection, Wang Huaiyu, Faseng's father and a highly esteemed leader of the Hunyuan sect, had lived in Fancheng until he died of natural causes in mid-1794. Although Zhixie apparently knew of Huaiyu's whereabouts, he did not involve him. Rather, Zhixie upheld Liu Song as the highest master of the new sect, titling him "venerable master of the sect" (*laojiaozhu*).[11] Not a highly regarded figure among the sectarians and far away from the sectarian communities in the Hubei-Henan border areas, Liu Song was destined to be a figurehead. In his absence, Zhixie would act as a surrogate, having full authority but without being named the sect's leader, which might work to his favor in the event of government persecution. When

Wang Huaiyu later came to know about the new sect, he chose not to join it.[12]

Having returned to the Xiangyang area, Liu Zhixie initially did well with the rebranded sect, recruiting new members and collecting "induction payments." Later in 1788, Song Zhiqing, a Xiangyang native and one of Zhixie's new inductees, went to Longde and submitted to Liu Song 50 taels of silver. In the following years, 1789 to 1793, Liu Song received visitors like this six times. Each time, after he accepted money, he burned a sheet of yellow paper and recited a few verses from the scriptures to pray for the contributors of the money. When Liu Song was arrested in late 1794, 2,000 taels of silver were discovered in his bedroom.[13] What Liu Song had received would only have been a small portion of the sect's total income; the rest would have been retained by Liu Zhixie and other chiefs who had the prerogative to induct new members. In 1800, when Zhang Xiaoyuan, one of the sect's managers who might have been hired by Liu Zhixie, was arrested, he confessed that the annual income from Sichuan alone had reached more than 10,000 taels in the previous few years.[14]

The flow of the money must have been tempting to Song Zhiqing. Perhaps entertaining the idea of setting up his own sect, Song ceased sharing his revenues with either Liu Song or Liu Zhixie.[15] In fact, before joining Sanyang, in 1782, Song Zhiqing had been inducted by his cousin, Song Wen'gao, into another sect that was active in the Xiangyang area, Shouyuan (Return to the Origin). The sect's scripture was the "Sutra of Great *Yang*" (Taiyangjing), which did not have as pronounced a millenarian streak as the scriptures of the Hunyuan sect.[16] Teamed up with Fan Xueming, another Xiangyang fellow, Song Zhiqing founded a new sect in 1792, Xitian Dacheng Jiao, or the "Teaching of the Great Vehicle of Western Heaven." Although the new sect used the "Sutra of Great *Yang*" as its main scripture, it also borrowed what Liu Zhixie had injected into the Sanyang teachings, the incarnation of Maitreya Buddha on earth and the upcoming great catastrophe, and used the same method of persuasion in converting people that Liu Zhixie's Sanyang sect did, claiming the only way of surviving the catastrophe was to join the sect. Now that he was the founder and leader of his own sect, Song Zhiqing severed his ties with Liu Zhixie, no longer viewing the latter as his teacher and superior.[17] Taking advantage of both the grassroots networks of the Shouyuan sect and the new eschatological doctrine, Song soon outperformed Liu, vying for new members and stealing Liu's followers, and expanding to southern Shaanxi.[18] A nonnative in the Xiangyang area, Zhixie must have suffered great losses in his clientele and income through Song's rivalry.

In the spring of 1792, Liu Zhixie went to Gansu and visited Liu

Song again. Although the details of their meeting are not known, Liu Song allowed Zhixie to bring his son, Liu Sier, the alleged incarnation of Maitreya Buddha, to Xiangyang, in an attempt to prove to Song Zhiqing that the ownership of the doctrine of the incarnation of Maitreya Buddha was with Sanyang. However, Song refused to recognize Liu Sier as Maitreya Buddha's incarnation, mocking Sier for not looking like the Buddha. Song declared that Maitreya Buddha had been incarnated in Li the Third Blind (Li Sanxiazi) of Henan's Nanyang and that Niu Ba was Li's son Mao Jindao (which implies "Liu" because the characters *mao* 卯, *jin* 金, and *dao* 刀 are parts of the character of *liu* 劉). Although he was blind at this time, Li would recover his vision at the right moment, Song claimed. While Song Zhiqing refused to accept Liu Zhixie's choice of Maitreya Buddha, Liu Sier also grumbled about the fact that he had not met Niu Ba during his stay in Xiangyang. Therefore, after sending Liu Sier back to Longde, Liu Zhixie returned to Anhui and asked one of his disciples, Liu Shengzhou, to allow him to rename his eleven-year-old nephew Wang Shuangxi, meaning "Wang the Double-Happiness," and then brought the boy as well as his uncle to Longde.[19]

On their arrival at Longde at the beginning of 1793, Liu Zhixie presented "Wang Shuangxi" as Niu Ba to Liu Song and Liu Sier, but it is not clear how the latter reacted to Zhixie's choice of Niu Ba. Having stayed in Longde for about a month, the visitors set out for home after Chinese New Year. As far as Liu Song knew, Zhixie would want to show this Niu Ba to Song Zhiqing in an attempt to reclaim some of his former followers from Song. However, when they reached Hubei, Liu Zhixie paid 10 taels and 50 coins to the boy and his uncle, sending them home, but he stayed in Hubei himself. To counter Liu Zhixie's claims regarding Maitreya Buddha and Niu Ba, Song Zhiqing revised his own. Now what he stated was that Maitreya Buddha had been reincarnated in a family named Zhang in the "Shadowless Mountain" (Wujingshan) in Henan and that Niu Ba was actually a person named Zhu Hongtao, who was also in Henan.[20] By directly using the last name of the Ming imperial house, Song Zhiqing inadvertently crossed the red line, ushering his sect into troubled waters. Meanwhile, Song's act deepened his feud with Liu. Although there are few records of their rift between the spring of 1793 and the autumn of 1794, some sectarians believed that the schism led to the exposure of their activities to the authorities, bringing about a widespread and severe crackdown.[21]

The crackdown was touched off in northeastern Sichuan. In the autumn of 1794, Fuk'anggan, Sichuan's outgoing governor-general, smashed a Shouyuan enclave in Daning that bordered Hubei's Zhuxi, arresting two dozen sectarians, including their leader, Xie Tianxiu, a

Daning native. Recruited by Chen Jinyu, a sectarian from Zhuxi, Xie had inducted new members in his hometown. By late 1794, the sectarians there had been well proselytized with the story of Maitreya Buddha and Niu Ba. Having instantly deciphered that "Niu Ba" meant the Zhu family of the Ming dynasty, Qianlong was alarmed by the subversive prophecy. He was further startled by the news that a mob of sectarians had ambushed the squad of local authorities escorting Chen Jinyu to Zhuxi following Chen's arrest elsewhere in Hubei. Not only was Chen freed by his fellow sectarians, a yamen runner was also killed in the melee. Qianlong, who had experience with the sectarian movement, was prompted to the realization that this might not be an ordinary sectarian incident but that a dangerous agenda could be at work. On QL59/08/20, Qianlong ordered, in a sternly worded edict, that the viceroys in the affected provinces round up all the people involved.[22]

In the remainder of 1794, manhunts were carried out in Henan, Hubei, Shaanxi, Sichuan, Anhui, and Gansu. Constant pressure on those provinces from the emperor intensified and expanded the persecution.[23] In a couple of months, hundreds of people were arrested and punished in those provinces, both sectarians and their teachers, including Song Zhiqing and Fan Xueming.[24] After interrogation, Song Zhiqing and several other leaders, including Qi Lin, a yamen clerk of Xiangyang, were executed. It is interesting that Song did not betray Liu Song and Liu Zhixie to the authorities. Instead, he stuck with his Shouyuan identity, declaring that he was the disciple of Song Wen'gao, who had inducted him into the Shouyuan sect.[25] Meanwhile, Qianlong let Lebao, the governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, arrest and then execute the nearly eighty-year-old Liu Song and his son, Liu Sier, in Longde.[26] Although Qianlong backed down from his hard line one month into the crackdown, admitting that the case had not been as serious and widespread as he had thought after he learned that the interrogations of the arrested revealed nothing more than "cheating the masses for money" (*pianqian huozhong*), the local governments in those provinces continued the manhunts.[27]

Inexplicably, Liu Zhixie survived again. After Liu Song was arrested, he confessed to the authorities his relations with Liu Zhixie and Song Zhiqing as well as their roles in their respective sects. On QL59/10/08 Qianlong ordered the Anhui authorities to apprehend Liu Zhixie.[28] However, Zhixie was not at home. Shortly before the persecution, Zhixie had planned to bring Wang Huaiyu from Fancheng to Taihe, not knowing that Wang was deceased. He sent Liu Qirong, a relative and a sectarian, to deliver 200 taels of silver to another sectarian in Henan for Wang's travel.[29] However, when Qirong reached Henan's Fugou, a theft occurred in which 200 taels were

stolen. Since Qirong carried the same amount of silver, he became a suspect. Defending himself before the magistrate of Fugou, Qirong said that the money was from Liu Zhixie for purchasing cotton in Henan. Thus, the magistrate requested his counterpart in Taihe to escort Zhixie to Fugou to testify. Right after Zhixie set out for Fugou—he managed to delay the trip by several days by using the excuse that he had to deal with some personal businesses first—his brother was arrested and Zhixie's home was searched, but nothing was found to prove his involvement in sectarian activities (likely Zhixie had used the several days' delay to arrange this). Zhixie's nephew, however, escaped and went to Fugou to alert Zhixie of the danger. Having not been closely watched since his arrival at Fugou a week earlier, Zhixie immediately ran away on QL59/10/15.[30]

Despite the intensive manhunt, Liu Zhixie returned to Taihe first. Instead of returning to his home at Yuanxiangji, he stayed with a sectarian in another town. Then, in early 1795, he headed to Xiangyang, whence the authorities lost trace of his whereabouts.[31] Throughout the remainder of 1794 and early 1795, the Qianlong emperor kept urging the viceroys in the central provinces to hunt for him.[32] Qianlong gathered that Liu must have hidden in the homes of fellow sectarians in Henan, Hubei, Shaanxi, or even Gansu, and Liu had indeed moved between southern Henan and the Xiangyang area, hiding in sectarians' homes (in Henan, he had lived in Biyang county for a stretch of time). Despite the schism between Liu Zhixie and Song Zhiqing, Song's disciples respected Liu, calling him "old master" (*laoshifu*). In fact, Liu had enhanced his position among them after Song Zhiqing and several other Shouyuan leaders were executed. More particularly, Liu Zhixie had been close with Yao Zhifu, a native of Zhushan and an influential Shouyuan teacher in Xiangyang. In the wake of the 1794 persecution, Yao had stepped into the limelight, taking up the leadership of the surviving sectarians. During his stay in Hubei in early 1795, Liu had hidden for some time in Yao's home in the suburbs of Xiangyang. He hid in a hollow wall in the daytime and went out and talked with Yao only at night.[33] Most likely, it was in those talks in the dark that the decision was wrought to stage a rebellion at the dragon's moment on the dragon's day in the dragon's month of the dragon's year (the tenth day of the third lunar month of 1796). It is also likely that the decision was made in the early spring of 1795, not too long after Liu Zhixie arrived in Hubei.

The decision did not come as a surprise or a rupture. As has been articulated in studies of the sectarian movement in late imperial China, suddenly heightened pressure from the state often served as a game changer, prompting cornered sectarians to opt for rebellion over other options.[34] In this case, the 1794 persecution and the lingering

manhunt in its wake was indeed the catalyst for rebellion. Although Liu Zhixie's rebranding of the Hunyuan sect in 1788 had presaged a violent phase to come, it was the executions of Song Zhiqing, Liu Song, Qi Lin, and others, and the arrests of hundreds of sectarians that attested to the coming of the great catastrophe that would take place at the end of the world, as foretold in millenarian eschatology. In order to survive and be reborn in the new world, one had to embrace the moment and rise against the authorities. Coincidentally, at the beginning of 1795, the Miao people in northeastern Guizhou and northwestern Hunan had transformed into an open uprising their ongoing protest against the influx of the Han Chinese into their home areas. The Qing had to deploy forces from several other provinces, including Hubei and Sichuan, to suppress the rebellion. By the autumn, the rebellion had evolved into a major conflict after the Qing forces failed to put it down on their first attempt. Qianlong appointed Fuk'anggan as commander-in-chief to oversee the campaign and allocated funds from the central government to support intensified operations.[35] For the sectarians plotting uprisings in central China, the Miao uprising occurred at an opportune time, as the hostilities in the southwest further corroborated their prophecy that the moment of the end was imminent. On a practical level, the deployment of the Qing troops to the Miao campaign left their home provinces defenseless, which would have further encouraged the conspirators.

After the decision to revolt was made, Liu Zhixie left Xiangyang for Henan and went into hiding. He was no longer in touch with Yao Zhifu. As Liu confessed in interrogation after his arrest in 1800, he was the creator of the idea of starting the revolt in the dragon's year, month, day, and time, as he had thought that the coincidences would have been appealing when mobilizing followers.[36] It is unlikely that Liu lied about this, since a rational choice in his situation would have been to try to distance himself from the rebellion. Nevertheless, it is another matter whether Liu had been prepared to join the action himself. Having never been a true believer himself, Liu had been making sectarian practice a livelihood, a lucrative, albeit dangerous, one. In early 1795, however, he must have been faced with the most dangerous circumstance he had encountered since entering the profession. After most other sectarian ringleaders in central China had been caught, Liu, who had been sentenced in absence by the Anhui authorities to "death by a thousand cuts," became the focal point of the authorities' manhunt. Under pressure from Beijing, local yamens in the provinces made numerous false arrests and tortured suspects.[37] Although he had appeared to be calm by choosing to stay put in the epicenter of the persecution, Liu must had been in constant apprehension. From his perspective, an uprising could help him out of

his predicament because the authorities' attention would be diverted to tackling insurgents. Moreover, Yao Zhifu and other leaders who were eager to rise were mostly Song Zhiqing's followers. Liu did not care if their networks and enclaves were exposed to the authorities once the rebellion started. After all, Song Zhiqing's camp had been Liu's longtime competitor. Removing them from the scene would mean an open market for Liu's sect. As callous and sinister as those hypothetical calculations may sound, the facts that Liu Zhixie abruptly withdrew from the rebellion at the eleventh hour and that most of the followers of the Sanyang and Hunyuan in southern Henan did not rise when the dragon time arrived—most likely Liu did not call on them to take action—do buttress this argument. As mentioned above, during the first few years of the rebellion, Liu's sect had been faring well economically: more than 10,000 taels was collected from his followers in Sichuan alone.

Ultimately, Liu Zhixie's true motive in helping plan the rebellion becomes less important. Contrary to Liu's ostensibly disingenuous and opportunistic approach to his sectarian devotion, plenty of other sectarians, both teachers and rank and filers, were truer to their faith and ready to brave a bloodbath when the destined moment came. For some, vengeance could have been a factor. Wang Conger (known as Qi Wang Shi, or Ms. Qi née Wang), a former vagrant acrobat and Qi Lin's eighteen-year-old widow, shaved her head and sought refuge in a Buddhist nunnery after her husband's execution. Once ferment for the rebellion started, Wang readily sprang forward, though she would not become a key leader until one year after the onset of the rebellion.[38] The experience of some other sectarians was similar.[39]

Starting in the spring of 1795, Yao Zhifu and his co-conspirators in Xiangyang dispatched agents and messengers carrying letters to other sectarian enclaves in western Hubei, southern Henan, southern Shaanxi, and northeastern Sichuan to instigate synchronized uprisings on the dragon's day. To many sectarian followers, the simple and undisputable prophecy of the coming of the moment to rise was irresistible. In some of those places, local authorities' continued harassment of and exaction of money from sectarians inadvertently aided the conspirators, driving many, sectarians and nonsectarians alike, to heed the call to arms.[40]

UPRISINGS IN HUBEI

Once the "dragon's day" plan was set in motion, none of the plot's creators was able to hold sway over its fallout. Thus, the rebellion did not start as one uprising led by one leader or one nucleus of leaders but unfurled in a cluster of uprisings each involving a few thousand or

as many as ten to twenty thousand people.[41] In Hubei, the uprisings sprang up mainly in two areas. In northwest Hubei, the uprisings spread from the east end of the Wudang Mountains to the northwestern tip of Hubei. In southwestern Hubei, Jingzhou, Yichang, and Shinan prefectures were home to several uprisings, including the first one in Jingzhou's Yidu and Zhijiang counties. The Qing response to these uprisings was localized at first but soon transformed into a concerted, nationwide effort, with troops being deployed from other provinces. (Map 1.2.)



MAP 1.2. Uprisings in Hubei in 1796. Locations of the uprisings and the battle of Zhongxiang.

The Yidu-Zhijiang Uprising

Located on the west bank of the Yangzi River, Yidu and Zhijiang, both in Jingzhou prefecture, were close and more connected with Yichang prefecture, in which many Bizika people lived. Referred to as "Tu Miao" by the Qing authorities and officially labeled as the "Tujia nationality" in today's People's Republic of China, the Bizika had been longtime residents in the upper Yangzi valley—that is, western Hubei, southeastern Sichuan (today's Chongqing municipality), and northwestern Hunan. After the reform in the Yongzheng period to replace local chieftains with the regular administrative system, many Chinese moved in. In the late eighteenth century, many Bizika had

embraced sectarian teachings, becoming zealous believers.

The masterminds of the uprising in Yidu deviated from the standard prophecy of the Hunyuan and Shouyuan sects that featured the alleged descendant of the Ming imperial family Niu Ba. Instead, they invented a new prophetical figure, Doggie Li (Li Quaner), who was said to be the incarnation of a divine general of an unknown time. When the fated dragon day came, it was said, Doggie Li would head from his native village in Shanxi to Henan and set up a new dynasty there. Liu Zhixie would serve as his advisor. Most likely, this story was created by Zhang Zhengmo and Liu Shengcai, two sectarian teachers, though Zhang later claimed that he received this prophecy from his own teacher, Bai Peixiang.[42]

In mid-1795, Zhang, who was in his mid-thirties, moved from Changyang, his hometown, to Yidu. Together with Liu, an Yidu native, Zhang began to use the Doggie Li prophecy to enlist potential insurgents among and outside of sectarian members. To make their message more convincing, they claimed that Zhang Zhengmo had met this Doggie Li in person and received a sword from the latter that he often carried. As told by them, only the ones who made donations to Doggie Li and joined him to fight could avoid the catastrophe that would transpire on the dragon's day. When this moment arrived, the "military immortals" (*wuxian*) in northwestern Hubei would come down to meet the "civil immortals" (*wenxian*) in southwestern Hubei, which would inaugurate massive killings. To survive the catastrophe, they passed on a charm for followers to remember and recite:

> Black wind suddenly blows for a day and then a night;
> Many people are to be blown to death,
> White bones piling up mountain-high,
> Blood spouting out to form a sea.[43]

Allegedly, the charm had been hidden inside a huge rock in the village in which Doggie Li lived but was revealed one day when the rock suddenly opened. Liu Shengcai told the sectarians that the characters for "sun" 日 and "moon" 月 were visible on the palms of Doggie Li.[44] Those characters together made the character *ming* 明, which could mean either the Ming dynasty or "brightness," implying the ultimate peaceful and blissful world in the future, as foretold in some sectarian doctrines. However, the plotters stopped short of revealing plans for a regime change.

In Yidu, Zhang Zhengmo and Liu Shengcai worked closely with another sectarian, Zhang Zongwen. Zongwen's son had married the daughter of Nie Chi, who had studied the sectarian teaching with Zongwen and whose father, Nie Jieren, was an affluent landlord. Together with Nie Chi, the plotters persuaded Nie Jieren, then in his

late sixties, to join their cause by relating to him the predicted scenario of total destruction and the prospect of holding a high office in a new regime. Nie Jieren contributed 100 taels of silver and offered his huge house tucked away in the mountains as their headquarters. When the uprising started, Nie was made the standard bearer, while the plotters stayed in the background, hoping that the elderly and wealthy Nie would command more respect and sway among the villagers.[45] From the end of 1795, the plotters had a smith forge weapons in a mountain cave and sent agents, including Liu Shengcai himself, to other places in western Hubei to instigate uprisings, though they never heard back from those agents. Meanwhile, the sectarians in Zhijiang availed themselves of the home of Liu Shengming, a sectarian chief there, to prepare for the uprising.[46]

About one week after Qianlong abdicated the throne to Jiaqing on New Year's Day in 1796, Zhang Zhengmo brought hundreds of sectarians carrying white banners, yellow charms, and weapons to Nie Jieren's home and told Nie that they should act now because the local authorities had intensified their crackdown on the sectarians. On 01/01/10, the officials in Yidu and Zhijiang, who had been informed of sectarian activities in the two counties, went to Nie's and Liu's homes to take on the potential rebels. At Nie's home, more than one thousand sectarians clashed with the officials and their troops, touching off the first uprising. A couple of days after, the insurgents from the two counties headed to the mountains at Jiangjiadang, about 200 *li* from the county seats of Zhijiang and Yidu. With about two thousand sectarians as their core, the rebel crowd soon expanded to over ten thousand by either persuasion or coercion. Although their detachments attacked the seats of Yidu and Zhijiang—only scores of Qing troops were left in each—they did not show a strong intention to take them but focused on pillaging supplies for holing up at Jiangjiadang.[47]

On receiving the reports of the uprising, acting governor of Hubei Huiling, a Mongol bannerman who had been stationed in Jingzhou to coordinate the logistics for the Miao campaign, rushed to the scene. However, he raised only one hundred soldiers, since most troops in the region had been deployed to the Miao campaign.[48] When Huiling's memorial on the uprising reached Beijing on 01/01/25, two weeks after the first clash, it did not arouse serious concern in the Forbidden City, which had been preoccupied with the Miao campaign; it was brushed aside as a small disturbance by local thugs. Without any help from Beijing, Hubei officials could only maneuver the limited military forces within their jurisdiction. Not until one month after the onset of the uprising did 1,400 Qing troops, including 300 bannermen from the Jingzhou garrison, reach the spot.[49] Meanwhile, the Hubei authorities

called for local residents to arm themselves to help the regulars in the fight, which ushered in an unprecedented phenomenon: hundreds of thousands of civilians in the war zone were enlisted as militiamen and fought along with the regulars in the years to follow.

As the pressure from the Qing forces mounted, since Jiangjiadang was not ideal for a long-term refuge, the insurgents, now amounting to perhaps twenty thousand, including insurgents' families and many kidnaped local residents, moved to Guanwannao, a more perilous mountain in Zhijiang, in the mid-second month. It was not reported to the throne in detail how the rebels made this move while under siege. Apparently, the Hubei forces that had been rushed there from all directions had failed to detect and intercept their enemy's moves. Not seeing any hope of other insurgents coming to their rescue, some insurgents became disillusioned, however. Days after their move to Guanwannao, Nie Jieren, the nominal leader, one of whose three sons had just been killed in a battle, and several others defected to the Qing forces.[50]

The rank-and-file insurgents seemed to be more committed. At Guanwannao, they barricaded the mountaintop with stone walls and land mines, and made guns, cannons, and bows (they even applied poison to arrowheads). With thousands packed in their fortresses, the insurgents struggled on a daily basis for food, water, and other supplies. Hygiene was problematic. In the early summer, an epidemic broke out, claiming thousands of lives.[51] Yet, they holed up at Guanwannao for more than five months. Huiling, the chief commander of the siege, proved to be incompetent. Although he had served on a few key frontiers such as Xining and Ili and was involved in logistical services for the second Gurkha war as governor-general of Sichuan, Huiling nevertheless had no experience commanding wars during his forty-year career.[52] As Qianlong commented, he "has been with the military but may not be good at it."[53]

Huiling was often idle in the standoff at Guanwannao, conducting the offensive sporadically but being more enthusiastic in reporting the difficulties he and his men encountered such as insufficient forces, bad weather, and difficult topography. The siege must have been porous, for the rebels did not seem to suffer food shortages, even though they had taken only a one-month supply of food when they moved there[54] —they must have found ways to procure supplies from outside for thousands of people. In the late summer, Huiling launched a major offensive by shelling the rebel forts. After the Qing cannon fire destroyed the outer fortification, Huiling stopped short of taking on the rebels retreating to their inner forts.[55] After Dangyang was recaptured by the Qing forces in the mid-seventh month, Qianlong put more pressure on Huiling. On 01/07/24, the troops lured the rebels

out of their forts to attack the Qing camps and then trapped and captured some of the attackers, including Zhang Zongwen.[56] Despite this setback, the remaining insurgents managed to persist for another few weeks. Not until the middle of the eighth month, after having been repeatedly reprimanded by Qianlong, did Huiling mount a showdown that lasted for days. On 01/08/17, the Qing forces used grenades and fire throwers to set the rebels' last forts on fire. Nearly 10,000 rebels and their relatives were reportedly either killed in the battle, burned to death, or drowned in their moats when escaping the fire. Nearly 3,000 were captured, including Zhang Zhengmo and several other leaders as well as Nie Jieren's two other sons. Huiling massacred nearly 2,500 captives including women (who were said to have fought against the troops) and gave the remaining 200 people, most of whom were women and children, to bannermen as slaves.[57]

The first uprising in Hubei was thus brought to its end seven months after it started. By this time, most other uprisings that started after this one had already been extinguished. Although Huiling received honorific titles for his long overdue victory, his unremarkable performance did not escape the notice of the new Jiaqing emperor, who had been keenly following the campaign in his father's shadow. Later Jiaqing had this to say about Huiling: "As for the commanders who have led the troops and conducted battles in all the theaters, everybody can be considered to be slack, but Huiling has been the slackest one."[58]

The Siege of Dangyang

Initially reluctant in sending reinforcements to Hubei, Beijing ordered four thousand troops from Henan and Shaanxi to Hubei in the middle of the second month, more than five weeks after the first uprising erupted in Yidu.[59] More uprisings occurred before those troops arrived. Responding to the call to arms by Xiangyang sectarian leaders, sectarians revolted in Donghu, Yuan'an, and Dangyang. On 01/02/15, they flocked to the seat of Dangyang county guarded by only several dozen troops. The sectarians inside the city, many of whom were yamen clerks, rose up from within and let their fellow sectarians in. In the following day, they killed Dangyang's magistrate and occupied the city.[60]

An important commercial hub in western Hubei, Dangyang was one of only two cities that the rebels captured for a stretch of time in the entire White Lotus War (the other was Linjiangshi in Sichuan, as will be discussed in the next chapter). Dangyang's fall heightened the gravity of the rebellion and convinced the central government of the necessity of sending more troops. Three high-ranking Manchu generals, Ohūi, Hengšui, and Yongbao, were sent to Dangyang by the

throne. Ohūi had been a longtime deputy to Fuk'anggan and had joined several frontier wars in the late Qianlong period. At the moment he was the supervisor-in-chief of the Rehe summer palace.[61] Hengšui was the Xi'an general, the nearest banner leader outside of Hubei. He set out from Xi'an with two thousand Manchu troops on 01/02/29.[62] Qianlong declined the request of Bi Yuan, the governor-general of Huguang, for elite banner troops from Beijing, because, although two thousand bannermen were not enough to guard every place in Hubei, their deployment would rouse too many disturbances on the long way from Beijing to Hubei and he could not find the right general to lead them. Instead, Qianlong ordered one more Manchu general to Hubei: Yongbao, the commander-in-chief (*dutong*) of Urumqi who had stopped in Xi'an on his way to Beijing for a royal audience. In addition, Qianlong designated Yongbao to co-command the campaign in Hubei with Bi Yuan.[63] However, none of the three generals reached Dangyang; all were caught in fighting against other uprisings in northern Hubei.

The siege of Dangyang drew the utmost attention of the Hubei authorities. Bi Yuan rushed there from the Yidu-Zhijiang front right after the city fell and led the siege himself.[64] A typical scholar-official who had been ranked in the first place among *jinshi* degree conferees in 1760, Bi was inexperienced in directing military operations, although he had been involved in the logistical affairs of several wars in the late eighteenth century. He was demoted for his involvement in the Gansu fraud scandal in the early 1780s but was soon reinstated, which might have been because of his cordial relationship with Hešen.[65] Soon after his appointment as governor-general of Huguang, Bi earned the nickname "Do-Nothing Bi" (Bi Buguan) since he was not vigorous in taking care of his responsibilities. However, Bi did not take a laissez-faire approach to the war finances in this campaign; he willingly availed himself of the opportunity to appropriate war funds to gratify the generals who came to Hubei to fight and, perhaps, to line his own pockets, as will be discussed later.[66]

Under Bi, the siege had not progressed well for months. The Qing forces merely shelled the city, lured the rebels out, and then killed them, but they did not make any attempt to take the city. Bi and his co-commanders complained constantly about insufficient forces, but the situation remained almost same after more troops arrived. Increasingly impatient with the everlasting siege, Qianlong chastised Bi Yuan relentlessly, pointing out many contradictions in his reports, while extending his criticism to other commanders in Hubei, including Huiling. With the pressure from Beijing mounting, Bi and his generals launched an attack on the city in the middle of the fifth month. Their cannon fire made a break in the city walls, but the troops who tried to

scale them were repelled by the rebels, which prompted another severe reprimand from Qianlong.[67] In a satiric tone, a scholar of Dangyang wrote the following verses on the Qing siege:

> Generals come to liquidate the bandits at the order of the emperor;
> Gathering from all the directions,
> The massive forces surround the city and attack it;
> The brave troops are generously rewarded with tons of cash;
> Going onto the platforms to shell the city day after day,
> They can claim the awards.[68]

Bi might have counted on the supplies inside of the city running out, which was not an unrealistic calculation. The rebels did not have a large combat force, even though they had coerced thousands of local residents to join them. Their leader, Yang Qiyuan, a native of Yuan'an and a sectarian teacher, divided his two to three thousand able-bodied men into five regiments, but they dwindled as casualties mounted up. Throughout the siege, the rebels made numerous, but unsuccessful, attempts to send dispatches out to connect with their counterparts in other places. The latter also tried to send in rescue forces to aid their comrades inside, all of which failed as well. Isolated and besieged, the rebels' supply shortages worsened from the fourth month. Houses were taken apart for firewood. Soon after, starvation became prevalent in the city. From the late fifth month, the insurgents tried repeatedly and desperately to break the siege, but none of their attempts succeeded.[69]

Finally, during high summer, Qing commanders designed a scheme to remove the rebel leader first. They sent a militiaman into the city to contact his acquaintance, Wang Zhiliang, who was on Yang Qiyuan's staff. A Sichuan native who was exiled to Dangyang in 1774 for a crime and became involved in sectarian activities thereafter, Wang agreed to switch sides. On 01/06/20, Wang killed Yang at dawn. Carrying Yang's head with him, Wang slipped down the city walls along with six family members and surrendered to the Qing.[70] With Yang removed, Bi Yuan and Shuliang, the former Heilongjiang general but then a palace guardsman of the third grade, stepped up their offensive. But first they hired thousands more militiamen, as they complained that their 1,400 troops were a force too small to take the city. Starting on 01/06/25, the Qing forces attacked Dangyang from several directions and then broke into the city from the east gate in the early morning of 01/06/28. Thousands of residents found their way out of the city, but many died of starvation and exhaustion soon afterward. The remaining rebels withdrew into the fortified bigger houses and continued fighting for two weeks. Not until 01/07/11 and the following day did the Qing forces finally destroy the last rebel

strongholds by firing cannons and throwing grenades. Three thousand rebels were allegedly killed in this showdown, and Chen Deben, who had become the rebel chief after Yang Qiyuan's murder, was caught alive.[71]

The Laifeng Uprising

Located at the southwestern tip of Hubei, Laifeng county was inhabited by a number of ethnic peoples, chief among whom were Bizika, and had become a sectarian enclave by the late eighteenth century.[72] As in Yidu, an affluent landlord named Chen Qiming had been a marquee figure of the sectarian community in Laifeng's Xiaoyou, although it is not clear if there were true masterminds behind Chen.[73] During the 1794 persecution, the sectarians in Laifeng had shocked Beijing by staging a violent protest against the authorities. Since Laifeng bordered Sichuan's Youyang department, the local officials from Youyang came to Laifeng and arrested six sectarians. When the arrested sectarians were escorted to Youyang, the Laifeng sectarians stormed the squad, freeing the arrested and beating and injuring the yamen runners. Consequently, Funing, the governor-general of Huguang, sent a force there and arrested more than two dozen participants in the incident.[74] This was the only case of open defiance during the 1794 persecution.

In early 1796, shortly before the arrival of the dragon's year, a sectarian agent, Wang Zijun, was sent from Xiangyang to Laifeng and called for an uprising. However, Wang set the day of action on 01/02/15, twenty-five days ahead of the dragon's day. It is likely that the Xiangyang plotters wanted this uprising to start earlier so that Qing attention would be drawn toward the province's south margin, thus reducing the Qing military presence in other areas of the province. Wang did not use any eschatological prophecy in his instigation. The message was simply that the time was ripe to revolt. Wang returned to Xiangyang right after the New Year. The sectarians in Laifeng zealously embraced his message of an upcoming revolt; tens of thousands joined it when it started on 01/02/15, including many from nearby Longshan and other counties of Hunan. Although there were a host of chiefs, including Chen Qiming, the one who commanded most respect was a Laifeng native named Hu Zhengzhong. Referred to by the rebels as "Third Master Hu" (Hu San Shifu), Hu was a local shaman in his mid-twenties and did not become a sectarian until 1794. The insurgents took the city of Laifeng and killed the magistrate. However, it was difficult to hold the city since it did not have city walls. Like their counterparts in other uprisings, the insurgents headed to the mountains and built several strongholds.[75]

At this point, Sun Shiyi, the acting governor-general of Sichuan and

a veteran frontier viceroy, had just arrived in Sichuan's Miaorong bordering Laifeng to stop the Hubei rebels from infiltrating Sichuan, since Hubei refugees were entering Sichuan in the wake of the Yidu-Zhijiang uprising.[76] Sun immediately took on the task of fighting against the insurgents in Laifeng. In the third month, Sun attacked their forts at Xiaoyou, killing over one thousand and setting the rest on the run.[77] On 01/04/15, Sun Shiyi broke their forts at Chayuanxi and then those at Hongyanbao, leaving Qiguzhai (Banner Drum Fort) as the only rebel stronghold in Laifeng.[78] However, Sun soon fell seriously ill—he was in his seventies—and passed away in the sixth month.[79] On Sun's death, Funing, who had arrived in Laifeng with the Hunan troops, was appointed to act as Sichuan's governor-general and lead the operations in Laifeng.[80]

With all the rebels taking refuge at Qiguzhai, supplies became scarce, and frictions arose among the rebels. Some, including some chiefs, contemplated either escaping or surrendering to the Qing. In the middle of the sixth month, Funing launched an attack on Qiguzhai. With the information provided by a rebel turncoat, the Qing forces captured Hu Zhengzhong, his younger brother, and their mother. Hu confessed that he had also intended to escape from Qiguzhai and to go to nearby Xianfeng and Xuanen counties to organize more uprisings.[81] Hu was instantly executed. Three weeks after Hu's capture, on the days 01/07/11 to 01/07/16, Funing, who had been under heightened pressure from Beijing, launched a forceful offensive. Firing on the rebels' fortresses to set them on fire, the Qing forces leveled the Qiguzhai stronghold, capturing Tian Gudun, who had stepped up as the main leader after Hu's capture, and other chiefs. Thousands were either killed or committed suicide. Another two to three thousand people, including many elderly, women, and children, surrendered to the Qing forces.[82]

When the Laifeng uprising was on its way to being extinguished, an uprising was launched at Xuanen's Longmashan. In the early summer, leaders from Qiguzhai had sent agents to Xuanen and contacted the sectarians there. Li Deng'ao, a local sectarian, mobilized over one thousand people and started an uprising on 01/06/11 in an attempt to support their brethren at Qiguzhai. They warded off several attacks by the local Qing forces and moved several times. In the wake of the fall of Qiguzhai, Funing led his force to Xuanen to take on this uprising. On hearing of the end of the Laifeng uprising, many insurgents committed suicide. In the eighth month, Li Deng'ao and a few other chiefs were captured when they came down from their forts and tried to gather some grain in the fields. Then the remaining people, four thousand strong and most being coerced, surrendered to Funing in the ninth month.[83]

What made the Laifeng uprising resonate for years in the White Lotus War were the atrocities committed by Funing following his conquest of Qiguzhai. Fearing a possible revolt by 1,700 to 2,000 able-bodied captives who were believed to be diehard insurgents, Funing slaughtered all of them in a cold-blooded manner. He first coaxed them into believing that they had been admitted into the Qing army and that they were to receive their uniforms and rations inside of the city of Longshan, Hunan, which bordered Laifeng. When the captives entered the city gate in batches, Qing soldiers who had hidden inside the city walls swarmed them and hacked each of them to death. This chilling incident, news of which spread near and far, became a mental barrier preventing the rebels from surrendering to the Qing. In early 1799, when the Jiaqing emperor tried to redirect the campaign that had gone astray, this case would be investigated, leading to Funing's punishment.[84]

The Changyang Uprising

Shortly after the first uprising started in Yidu, an uprising was held in Langping of Changyang county, Yichang prefecture. In Changyang, the majority of the population were Bizika, and the sectarian networks were dense. The mastermind of this uprising was Zhang Xunlong, who had lived in Fangxian but moved to Changyang in the spring of 1795. Zhang stayed at the home of Lin Zhihua, a Changyang native who had studied with Bai Peixiang, also the sectarian teacher of Zhang Zhengmo, the leader of the Yidu uprising. It is likely that Zhang Xunlong was an agent sent by the conspirators in Xiangyang. It is also likely that Zhang Zhengmo moved to Yidu in 1795 at Zhang Xunlong's instruction. In Changyang, Zhang Xunlong and Lin Zhihua persuaded Tan Jiayao, a Bizika in his mid-twenties who was a sectarian in Langping, to join the uprising. Lin and Tan were made standard bearers, but Zhang Xunlong stayed behind as Zhang Zhengmo had in the Yidu-Zhijiang uprising. In the second month of 1796, Tan led thousands of locals to revolt first, followed by another uprising led by Lin Zhihua. The two insurgent groups, together numbering over ten thousand, set up their base at Langping. Tied up with the sieges in Zhijiang and Dangyang, the Hubei authorities could only send two thousand Anhui troops to tackle this uprising. The siege was lethargic; the rebels were able to send dispatches to attack nearby places in Changyang and other counties. At one point, they even threatened to attack the county seat of Changyang. In the early autumn, the news that the Laifeng uprising had been crushed and that tens of thousands of insurgents had been killed alerted the rebels in Langping to disperse when the Qing forces freed from battle in Laifeng might be sent against them. In the eighth month, they evacuated Langping in two

groups. While Lin Zhihua led one to Ziqiu and holed up on a mountaintop, Tan Jiayao led the other to Badong county's Tanjiacun.[85]

Given that the Changyang uprising had been planned in concert with the Yidu-Zhijiang uprising and that Zhang Zhengmo had sent many messengers to Changyang appealing for help after moving to Guanwannao, the Changyang leaders sent out a dispatch of nine hundred men and their families to Liangshan on the border between Changyang and Yidu shortly before they abandoned their Langping base. Disguised as refugees, this group initially intended to lead their besieged brethren at Guanwannao to safety if the latter broke from the siege. When it became clear that their counterparts had no chance to break out, the Changyang rebels holed up on a mountaintop at Liangshan. There they killed Buddhist monks in a temple and coerced scores of local households to join them. After he crushed the rebels at Guanwannao, Huiling headed to Liangshan himself, while sending Chengde, the former Chengdu general, and Wentu, the regional commander (*zongbing*) of the Xing'an-Hanzhong command in southern Shaanxi, to Ziqiu to fight against Lin Zhihua and seven hundred Jiangxi troops to Badong to fight against Tan Jiayao. At Liangshan, Huiling again slowed down, citing as excuses rain, slippery paths and difficult terrain, as well as an injury to his shoulder by a stone. Not until late in the tenth month did Huiling break up their mountaintop camp and annihilate the several hundred rebels and their dependents, thanks to several rebel renegades who were sent back to the forts and set them ablaze.[86]

After Laifeng, Funing went to Badong to tackle Tan Jiayao. Shortly before him, Chengde had also been sent there. The reinforced Qing forces compelled Tan to abandon the forts at Tanjiacun following a defeat in which Tan was injured and, after a miraculous escape from Badong in face of large numbers of Qing forces, to rejoin Lin Zhihua at Ziqiu. At Ziqiu, the conjoined rebel force, probably numbering fifteen to sixteen thousand, underwent some reorganization. They set up five divisions and conferred on their chiefs titles such as governor (*dudu*), vanguard-general (*zongxianfeng*), vanguard (*xianfeng*), commissioner (*tixun*), and supervisor (*tidian*). These titles were unique, differing from those used by many other rebel bands. More important, they adopted a new reign name, Tianyun, meaning "heavenly fortune," even though it soon went into abeyance.[87] After Funing and Chengde followed Tan to Ziqiu, they stepped up the siege and tried to cut off the rebels' water supply, which forced them to plan a withdrawal. Having secretly built a bridge over the Qing River, south of the mountain, the insurgents managed a surprise escape from heavily besieged Ziqiu in the mid-tenth month. Furious at his commanders,

who allowed such a large crowd, including women and children, to escape without being detected and intercepted, Qianlong deprived Chengde and Wentu of their *baturu* titles and hat trappings, but the two blamed a lower officer who had been stationed at the spot where the rebels built the bridge.[88]

After their extraordinary withdrawal from Ziqiu, the Lin-Tan force headed to Huangbaishan (Yellow Cypress Mountain), a massive mountain south of the Qing River, with steep cliffs on its north side by the river. They built forts on the mountaintop and at Sifangtai, a high point south of the mountain, which oversaw the only passage to the mountaintop. At Huangbaishan, the insurgents would hole up for more than five months, despite tremendous difficulties in obtaining supplies. At the end of 1796, Huiling arrived after crushing the rebels at Liangshan, but he soon left for Xiangyang. Then Chengde was transferred to eastern Sichuan. The siege was left to Funning.[89]

Before leaving, Huiling had heightened his offensives and seized several fortresses, but Funing did not make any real progress for months afterward.[90] His listless siege was a stark contrast to his relatively speedy victory in Laifeng, which was built on what Sun Shiyi had achieved before the latter succumbed to illness. At Huangbaishan, Funing focused only on preventing the insurgents from getting supplies instead of actively attacking them.[91] Nevertheless, weeks after his report that the insurgents were running out of supplies —though mountain springs were abundant—Funing still could not make any headway. Qianlong sharply chided Funing for his half-hearted siege, quick to spot absurd information in his reports: if the rebels did not have sufficient ammunition, how could they produce "fire as rainfall" (*qiangpaoruyu*)? Realizing that he might have been too generous in granting rewards to the troops, Qianlong ceased rewarding all troops regardless of performance but granted an extra one-month stipend only to the wounded.[92]

Having lost confidence in Funing, Qianlong sent Lebao, governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou, to Huangbaishan. Lebao, however, was sent back to Guizhou to tackle an uprising by the Zhongjia Miao people immediately after he reached Huangbaishan on 02/01/14.[93] Qianlong then sent Eldemboo of the Manchu Yellow Banner there. Eldemboo's family in Jilin had taken pearl collecting as its profession for generations, though his maternal uncle, Fude, was a high-ranking court official. By charging the enemy on the battlefield in many wars in the late Qianlong period, Eldemboo earned promotion to the top echelon of the banner hierarchy. He became a vice commander-in-chief (*fudutong*) after the invasion of Nepal in 1792 and was soon promoted to commander-in-chief. Although he was literate in Manchu, his Chinese was not even serviceable, and he always used secretaries

for writing memorials in Chinese.[94] At forty-nine, he was not in good health but was as valiant as before. However, under Funing's supervision, Eldemboo's debut in the White Lotus War was uncharacteristic.

Early in the third month of 1797, Eldemboo arrived at Huangbaishan. He soon stepped up the offensive and tried in earnest to take on the rebels.[95] Not long after, on 02/03/21, the Qing forces seized the Sifangtai fortress, opening up the gateway to the main forts on the mountaintop.[96] Unable to hold out any longer, Lin Zhihua and Tan Jiayao executed another escape, leading their force away through the pathless mountains on a misty day. They first moved southward to Changle's Baiyuzhai and then went to Bayeshan on Yichang's border with Shinan.[97] At Bayeshan, or "Palm Leaf Mountain," which was also perilous, the Lin-Tan force again fortified themselves on the mountaintop.

At Huangbaishan, the Qing forces seized the empty forts and reported that they had finally leveled this rebel stronghold. Qianlong was furious that his troops again had allowed the insurgents to escape to yet another mountain, for he knew all too well that this might result in another protracted and costly siege. He ridiculed Funing and Eldemboo for claiming that their troops were slowed down by fog and rain, and had to wait for supplies, whereas the rebels had moved swiftly from one mountain to another. Having long been in doubt about the campaign reports, he was especially upset that the rebel force was still eight to nine thousand strong after he had been told numerous times that scores or even hundreds of them had been killed in each engagement.[98]

As Qianlong predicted, the Bayeshan siege lasted for months. Keenly aware of their limited supplies, the insurgents tried to break out numerous times, but all their attempts failed. For their part, the Qing troops could not approach the main forts on the mountaintop even after they had crushed the forts on its outskirts. The frustrated Qianlong withheld awards to all the troops, even including the injured, pressing the generals to quickly take over the mountaintop and annihilate the rebels.[99] In the sixth month Funing and Eldemboo accelerated their offensives, conquering more rebel forts. However, on 02/06/20, the Lin-Tan force made another surprising escape by crushing a few Qing forts, although they lost hundreds of their people during the breakout. The surviving insurgents moved quickly to Jianshi, attempting to penetrate Sichuan and join their counterparts there.[100] Despite the huge decline in their number, the rebellion went on.

The Uprisings South of the Wudang Mountains

Sandwiched by the Wudang Mountains and the Daba Mountains in northwestern Hubei, Nanzhang, Baokang, Fangxian, Zhushan, and Zhuxi were home to the Shouyuan sect. After the first uprising in Yidu-Zhijiang, Yao Wenxue, Yao Zhifu's son and the chief sectarian teacher in this region, mobilized his followers. As in the Laifeng uprising, Yao did not have a sophisticated reason to instigate an uprising but simply told the sectarians that the fatal moment had come (*jieshu daole*) and that their counterparts in other places had already taken action. The date set for the uprising by Yao, however, was not the dragon day in the third month. Instead, it was 01/02/20, five days later than the date set for the Laifeng uprising but twenty days before the dragon's day.

Taking advantage of the weak Qing military presence in the region, the sectarians had initial successes once they rose late in the second month. On 01/02/20, the rebels took the city of Baokang. Two days later, the seat of Zhushan also fell to them; its magistrate hanged himself. Neither of the cities had walls, and both had only a few dozen soldiers guarding them. Meanwhile, sectarians also revolted in Zhuxi, Fangxian, and Nanzhang. In each place, a few thousand people were drawn to the rebellion.[101] Although the seat of Fangxian was equally empty with only one hundred or so soldiers and few muskets and cannons, the city, which had walls, was prepared. Led by the magistrate and his staff, the residents partook in the defense of the city; even women and children helped in carrying rocks to the foot of the city walls. Starting on 01/02/19, the rebels attacked the city several times but were all beaten back.[102]

At this point, Wentu was on his way from his post in southeastern Shaanxi to western Hubei at Bi Yuan's invitation. Once he crossed the border to Zhuxi, he was detained when he encountered the local rebels head on, but he was soon joined by Hengšui, Yongbao, and the two thousand Shaanxi troops. After having cleared the rebels in Zhuxi, Wentu rushed to the seat of Fangxian, and Hengšui and Yongbao went to Zhushan. Outside of the city of Fangxian, Wentu first expelled the rebels besieging the city on 01/03/07 and then eliminated them with the help of thousands of militiamen hired locally. In the fight, Yao Wenxue was killed by militiamen. On 01/03/16, Hengšui retook the city of Zhushan following a fierce night fight. On 01/03/24, the local militias in Baokang recovered the city after days of fighting. By the end of the fourth month, the Shaanxi forces had crushed all the uprisings south of the Wudang Mountains. Then Hengšui headed to Xiangyang (Yongbao had headed there earlier in the month when the city of Xiangyang was attacked by the rebels), and Wentu went to Ziqiu to help battle the Changyang uprising.[103]

In the northwestern tip of Hubei, another uprising erupted in

mountainous Yunxian. Although county officials had arrested and executed Xu Liang, the sectarian teacher in Yunxian, the sectarians he had mobilized revolted on 01/03/04, when they heard that Zhushan had been captured by insurgents. Led by Wang Quanli and his four brothers, who had studied the sectarian teachings with Xu Liang, the two thousand rebels set up four forts on mountaintops. Given Yunxian's proximity to Shaanxi, Yimian, the governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu who had been stationed in Shangzhou since the start of the rebellion in Hubei, immediately sent some of his troops to tackle those rebels. Aided by militiamen hired from nearby Baihe, the Shaanxi force led by Besiyang, acting regional commander of Yansui, leveled three of the four rebel forts.[104] At the beginning of the fourth month, Qianlong ordered Yimian to go to Yunxian himself and wipe out the rebels there.[105]

Therefore, Yimian and Ke Fan, the provincial military commander (*tidu*) of Guyuan, crossed the border to Yunxian to take on the last rebel stronghold at Nihekou, 200 *li* from the county seat of Yunxian. Another Manchu general marched with them, Mingliang, the newly appointed acting Guangzhou general who had been on his way from Ili to the Miao campaign at the emperor's order.[106] On 01/04/12, they arrived at Nihekou. The rebels' fort was on the top of cliffs with only one narrow trail leading there, but the battle to take the fort proceeded extremely quickly. First, a squad of troops was sent to cut off the rebels' water supply, which was intended to divert the insurgents' attention. When a large number of rebels went to safeguard their water source, a small group of selected soldiers crept to the foot of the fort and threw in fire grenades (*huodan*) to set it ablaze. Taking advantage of the ensuing chaos, the troops pushed into the fort and killed or captured all the rebels who had survived the fire. Wang Quanli was among the captured.[107]

Although Yimian did not indicate it in his memorial, Mingliang must have been the chief commander of this successful battle, as he was far more experienced in warfare than Yimian and Ke Fan. Of the eminent Fuca clan of the Bordered Yellow Banner—his aunt was Qianlong's first empress, and his uncle, Fuheng, served as Qianlong's chief grand councilor for two decades until his death in 1770—Mingliang had a long and illustrious military career, having participated in several wars in the late Qianlong period and served as Heilongjiang general and Ili general.[108] Although his cousins, Fuk'anggan and Fuchang'an, were Hešen's associates and he himself had married a princess, Mingliang was unwittingly placed in the camp of Hešen's political rivals because Mingliang had been Agūi's deputy in several wars. Indeed, Agūi had requested Mingliang's release in 1784, when Mingliang had been arrested and sentenced to

imprisonment awaiting death for his mishandling of an exiled high-ranking official in Xinjiang (which led to the latter's suicide), and let him join the campaign against the second Muslim uprising in Gansu.[109] Nevertheless, by 1796, Agūi had been marginalized in court politics by his own choice and owing to his advanced age. No longer having a powerful patron in the court, Mingliang was prone to Qianlong's criticism and punishment. In 1795, Mingliang was again charged for a lapse that had occurred years earlier: he had allowed his troops to trade animal hides when he had been the Heilongjiang general. He was thus deprived of all titles and positions, and exiled to Urumqi in 1795, before he was reinstated and sent to join the Miao campaign.[110]

After the victory at Nihekou, Qianlong rewarded both Yimian and Ke Fan with promotions and rewards but only granted Mingliang the title of "imperial guardsman of the first grade" and made him an acting regional commander of the Green Standard Army if such a vacancy were to become available, which was a lower position than his current position as acting Guangzhou general. Even this parsimonious favor had to be justified. As Qianlong reasoned, the justification was that Mingliang "used to be a high-ranking [military] official and has been in wars many times," and he was one of the commanders of the Nihekou battle.[111] An old-school Manchu warrior, the sixty-year-old Mingliang adhered to the traditional Manchu way of warfare; he favored horseback archery and valued bannermen while holding the Chinese troops in contempt, let alone temporarily recruited militiamen. However, his stubborn adherence to Manchu military professionalism helped isolate him from some of his peers who did not share his attitude. Although Mingliang would soon prove that he was the only lion in the early stages of the suppression campaign, wiping out insurgent strongholds one after another, his contributions were often downplayed or ignored.

The Xiaogan Uprising

Until the early summer of 1796, sectarian uprisings had only occurred in western Hubei, leaving central and eastern Hubei largely undisturbed. Some sectarian leaders had planned to rise in central Hubei, for example, in Jingshan and Suizhou, in the wake of the first uprisings, but none of the plans succeeded; the plotters were either caught or committed suicide.[112] In the early summer, however, central Hubei was alarmed by an uprising in Xiaogan, 37 miles northwest of Wuchang, the provincial capital.

At the beginning of 1796, sectarians Liu Shizhen and his elder brother, who were Xiaogan natives but had lived in Xiangyang for more than twenty years, returned to Xiaogan. Shortly after, Sun

Zaigong, a sectarian teacher in Xiangyang, joined the Lius in Xiaogan. They did not start to mobilize for the uprising until late in the fourth month, when the local authorities were searching for sectarians in Xiaogan. After several of their attempts of uprising were prevented by local authorities aided by militiamen and local gentry members, one finally materialized on 01/05/06. Led by the Liu brothers and Sun, several thousand insurgents converged and fortified themselves on a hill at Hujiazhai, 22 miles west of Xiaogan city, and managed to repel several attacks by the local troops.[113] With most garrison troops in their prefecture deployed to Hunan for the Miao campaign, Zu Zhiwang, Hubei's administrative commissioner, asked Jiangxi to send one thousand troops to secure the defense of Wuchang.[114]

Given that the uprising in Xiaogan directly threatened Wuchang, in which rebel posters had been found in the streets and rumors had been circulating, Qianlong redirected Mingliang, who had been on his way to Changyang to help in the siege against the Lin-Tan force, to Xiaogan.[115] Meanwhile, Qianlong ordered another thousand soldiers from Jiangxi to aid Mingliang. Arriving in Xiaogan on 01/06/21, Mingliang organized more than two thousand Qing troops, including those from Jiangxi, into four units and began to build them fortresses near Hujiazhai.[116] On 01/06/26, when the troops were still building their forts, the rebels attacked them three times, but all of the attacks were repulsed. On the following day, rebels in the thousands again charged the Qing camps. During the battle, Mingliang sent two dispatches to take two heights near the rebels' fortresses. Panicked, the rebels withdrew to their forts surrounded by two layers of wooden stockades. At this point, Mingliang gave the order to set their forts ablaze with fire arrows (*huojian*) and fire grenades. Thanks to a strong wind, the forts were largely burned down. Many rebels and their families were burned to death, while many others threw themselves into moats and were drowned. As the fire burned itself out on the following day, the Qing troops caught hundreds of insurgents and their relatives, including Liu Shizhen (his brother and Sun Zaigong had been killed when the fort was destroyed), many being salvaged from the moats.[117] The Xiaogan uprising, the only uprising that could bring immediate danger to Hubei's political center, was thus brought to its end one week after Mingliang's arrival. This speedy victory would help Mingliang when he encountered adverse situations later in the campaign—it would be cited, time and again, among Mingliang's other contributions, when the emperor needed to justify keeping him in the war. To Mingliang himself, his success at Xiaogan became a prized memory, a story he loved to tell later in his life.[118]

The Xiangyang Uprising and Yongbao's Commandership

The uprising in Xiangyang started weeks later than the uprisings elsewhere. It seemed that its leaders tried to adhere to the planned dragon day. In the second and third months, a few small uprisings erupted in different locales, then the insurgents converged at Huanglongdang, or "Yellow Dragon Cave," east of Xiangyang city and the Han River, forming a crowd of ten thousand people. Some were from Henan.[119] Once the uprising started, its leaders sent agents to Henan to search for Liu Zhixie, who had gone into hiding in Nanyang, but with no success. However, the leaders deliberately kept secret whether Liu Zhixie was with them, which confused the Qing side for some time before they found that Liu was not with the insurgents.[120]

Without Liu, Yao Zhifu and a few others stepped up and titled several among them "marshals" (*yuanshuai*), but the hierarchy among them is not clear.[121] Wang Conger left the nunnery in which she had been living after her husband's execution in 1794 and joined the uprising. Yet the records, including the captured rebels' confessions, do not indicate that she possessed any clout with the leadership in 1796.[122] Among those "marshals," only Wang Tingzhao belonged to the Hunyuan sect, with all the others associated with the Shouyuan sect. In his early fifties, Wang Tingzhao was referred to by the sectarians in Xiangyang as "Uncle Wang" (Wang Dashu). Natives of Henan's Xihua county, which was not far from Luyi, Wang Tingzhao's family had some ties with the sectarian Wang family at Luyi's Wangjiacaiyuan. As Wang told his interrogators, his grandfather had been a prominent figure within the sectarian community whose portrait Wang carried until his capture in 1801.[123] Wang Tingzhao might have left his hometown during the 1775 persecution against the Hunyuan sect. Although he did not tell the interrogators where he had been between then and 1796, and he insisted that he had not been engaged in any homiletic activities, it is most likely that he had been in the border area between Nanyang and Xiangyang living off the sectarian profession, though he might have had a small business at the same time, which is what he told his interrogators. During those years, Wang Tingzhao must have crossed paths with Liu Zhixie, although he did not reveal this even under torture. Despite the obscurity surrounding him, it is clear that Wang Tingzhao was a member of the core leadership of the sectarian community in Xiangyang and well respected.[124]

The quick collapse of the uprisings south of the Wudang Mountains doomed the chance for the Xiangyang rebels to move westward. Therefore, they turned north. After having fortified at Shuanggou, northeast of Xiangyang, they sent scouts in the fourth month to Henan's border areas between Dengzhou and Xinye.[125] Despite having dense sectarian networks, Henan had been kept largely in order when

western Hubei was in upheaval, thanks to some degree to preemptive measures adopted by Jing'an, Henan's governor. In the wake of the first uprising in Hubei, Jing'an swiftly arrested sectarians who he thought might instigate uprisings and strengthened the military presence along the border with Xiangyang.[126] When Xiangyang rebels harassed his border areas, Jing'an deployed more troops and hired militias locally, while pleading with the throne for reinforcements. Although five hundred Green Standard troops from Shaanxi had arrived in Xiangyang, what Jing'an desired were the elite troops of the Scouting Brigade (Jianruiying) and the Firearms Brigade (Huoqiying) in Beijing. Despite his concern over the possible spread of the rebellion to Henan, Qianlong had been hesitant to use those elite banner regiments, reasoning that it was difficult to find generals to lead them, as he had said when turning down Bi Yuan's request for the bannermen from Beijing following the fall of Dangyang.[127] In Qianlong's rhetoric, the bannermen should be reserved for wars on the frontiers with foreign enemies, and it would be disgraceful for them to fight the ragtag rebels.

For Qianlong, what was more urgent and important was a capable commander-in-chief. On 01/04/01, he redirected Ohūi to Xiangyang instead of to Dangyang.[128] After he arrived in Xiangyang, however, Ohūi did not intend to wipe out the rebels quickly; he called off the fight after a one-day attack, even though he had sufficient forces. Disappointed, Jing'an voiced his complaint to the throne, saying that he could not understand Ohūi's rationale.[129] Rather than fighting the insurgents in earnest, Ohūi focused more on requesting reinforcements. He persistently asked for Manchu bannermen or Solon soldiers to be sent Hubei, citing the large number of rebels and the incompetence of the Green Standard troops and hired militias.[130] Not swayed, Qianlong agreed only to deploy two thousand Green Standard troops from southern Zhili and send twenty imperial guardsmen with the *baturu* title from Beijing to lead them.[131] Qianlong even suggested to Ohūi that he could use the Mongol horse thieves in exile in Hubei and Henan, since they could make good soldiers given their superb horse riding skill and strong desire to return to Mongolia after paying for their crimes.[132] However, Qianlong soon decided to turn the helm of the Xiangyang theater over to Yongbao.

Yongbao was from a Manchu aristocratic family, the Foimo clan of the Bordered Red Banner. His father, Wenfu, was chief commander in the second Jinchuan war but was killed in 1773 in a night attack by the enemy. Qianlong at first honored Wenfu as a martyr but later blamed him for the defeat in which thousands of Qing troops perished, thus depriving Yongbao of the noble rank inherited from Wenfu, earl of the first grade.[133] Yet Wenfu's posthumous dishonor did

not adversely affect his sons' careers. The younger of two brothers, Yongbao had followed Wenfu to Jinchuan. On that fatal night, he braved the enemy's flying arrowheads and brought back his father's corpse. However, his appointments afterward were mostly civil ones. Not until the last years of the Qianlong reign was he moved to military positions in Xinjiang. On hearing of the fall of Dangyang on his way to the capital, Yongbao begged the throne to allow him to join the campaign in Hubei. Despite his meager military record, Qianlong thought him to be "experienced in military affairs."[134] Fuk'anggan, who must have gotten to know Yongbao during the second Jinchuan war, also recommended him to lead the campaign in Xiangyang.[135]

When Yongbao assumed commandership in Xiangyang in the summer, the insurgents had been on the losing end in their attempt to take root in the area. They tried but failed to take the city of Xiangyang early in the fourth month after they had burned Fancheng, which did not have city walls. Taking advantage of their firearms, a couple of thousand Qing forces under Ohūi inside the city of Xiangyang managed to repel attacks by large numbers of rebels from three directions, leaving thousands of casualties on the rebel side.[136] Historically, the city of Xiangyang had often been fought over ferociously by belligerent parties because of its strategic significance in controlling the upper Yangzi River valley and central China.[137] The rebels' failure in taking it was therefore not inconsequential. With the arrival of Hengšui and Yongbao, the rebels were hard pressed at Shuanggou. However, they soon demonstrated their edge over their counterparts in other places in Hubei; they did not try to hold out at one spot but were adept at movement. On 01/05/16, the Qing forces staged a forceful assault on the rebel headquarters at Shuanggou only to find out that the main rebel force numbering in the tens of thousands had evacuated the place several days earlier and moved to Guanzhuang, 13 miles to the east. In the following weeks, the Xiangyang force moved constantly and swiftly, at first eastward to Zaoyang and then to the south in a steep turn. Early in the seventh month, they were approaching Zhongxiang, a middle-sized city on the east bank of the Han River. Although they suffered some setbacks en route, the rebels were successful in warding off the Qing forces' interception and made their first long trek out of their besieged home region.[138] From Zhongxiang, they could join forces either with the rebels in Dangyang and Zhijiang, or with those in Xiaogan, thus posing a threat to Wuchang.

At this point, Qianlong could no longer contain his fury toward Bi Yuan and Huiling for their protracted sieges in Dangyang and Zhijiang. On 01/06/09, he appointed Yongbao as commander-in-chief of all the military forces in Hubei and soon afterward made Yongbao

the acting governor-general of Huguang.[139] Nevertheless, Yongbao's first act as commander-in-chief was to bargain with the throne while halting major actions. He claimed that he intended to conduct an all-out attack on the Xiangyang rebels in Zhongxiang. To this end, he asked for twenty to thirty thousand troops to be sent to Hubei from the Miao campaign. After Dangyang was finally retaken, Yongbao headed there at the end of the seventh month and met with Bi Yuan. Then he requested that Bi resume serving as governor-general and thus continue to head the logistical services, while he retain only the commandership-in-chief of the campaign himself, since he could not handle simultaneously the duties entailed by the two positions. Eagerly anticipating Yongbao's showdown in Zhongxiang, Qianlong granted all Yongbao's requests. In addition, he conferred on Yongbao the honorific title of "grand guardian of the heir apparent" (*taizi taibao*) and on Qingcheng, a general under Yongbao, the title of "junior guardian of the heir apparent" (*taizi shaobao*). At the same time, Qianlong could hardly hide his impatience or even ire at Yongbao, who had been slow to act and had delayed for too long.[140]

Before he initiated the actions, Yongbao made yet another request: to redirect Mingliang, who had been on his way to join the battle in the Yidu-Zhijiang theater, to Zhongxiang. When Mingliang arrived at the Zhongxiang front early in the eighth month, more than ten thousand Qing troops had assembled there. According to Yongbao's plan, the Qing forces would launch a pincer attack from north and south against allegedly fifty to sixty thousand Xiangyang rebels stationed to the north of Zhongxiang city. Mingliang soon found out, however, that Yongbao had arranged more than nine thousand troops on the north flank but positioned only Mingliang and another general, Deguang, with their four thousand troops on the south. After Mingliang angrily complained about it, Qianlong repeatedly criticized Yongbao for his selfishness and ordered the battle postponed until adequate forces were arranged in all directions so that they could wipe out the Xiangyang rebel force in this showdown.[141]

On 01/08/24, the Qing forces started their forceful offensive. The intense fighting did not end until the following morning. It was a total disaster to the rebels, thousands being killed and thousands falling captive, including numerous women and children. Nevertheless, the Qing forces failed to exterminate the entire rebel force. Rebels and their families managed to evacuate in small groups, according to their plan before the battle.[142] Again showing his efficiency, Mingliang pushed relentlessly from the south. However, Yongbao did not carry out his part of the pincer attack, allowing the rebels to escape to the north even though the north prong was equipped with the heaviest forces. Then in his report to the throne Yongbao downplayed

Mingliang's contribution. Consequently, all chief commanders but Mingliang received either promotions or rewards. Not swallowing this silently, Mingliang sent a secret memorial accusing Yongbao of helping the enemy to escape, which was not made public until 1799, when the Jiaqing emperor cashiered Yongbao for the second time in the campaign. In Jiaqing's view, the failure to exterminate the Xiangyang insurgents in the battle of Zhongxiang led to the spread of the rebellion to Shaanxi and Sichuan, causing it to linger on for so long, and for this Yongbao was responsible.[143]

After their fiasco in Zhongxiang, the Xiangyang insurgents retreated in batches to Xiangyang and regrouped at Shuanggou. But the Qing forces soon arrived and attacked them from several directions, leaving rebel casualties in the thousands. To break the siege at Shuanggou, the Xiangyang force divided into two groups. One group, led by Yao Zhifu, moved eastward to Zaoyang and then Henan's Tangxian, while another one, led by Zhang Hanchao, went northwest toward Henan's Dengzhou, both aiming at moving into Henan. However, the assiduous Jing'an had already stepped up security along Henan's borders after the insurgents returned to the Xiangyang area. Early in the ninth month, the Hubei troops intercepted Yao's division. In the battle, Yao's mother, daughter-in-law, and grandsons were arrested. Having crossed the Bai River and approached Lüyanyi, Zhang's force also failed to thrust into Henan. It turned southward and joined forces with Yao.[144]

On 01/08/30, Helin, then commander-in-chief of the Miao campaign, died of illness (Fuk'anggan had died earlier in the year). Eager to bring the campaign against the Miao to its end so that the troops there could be freed to take on the sectarian rebels in Hubei, Qianlong decided to transfer Mingliang and Ohūi from the Xiangyang theater to the Miao campaign.[145] The bickering between Yongbao and Mingliang was also a factor in Mingliang's transfer—even the officials in Beijing had heard about it.[146] Mingliang's departure weakened the campaign in Hubei, leaving there only mediocre commanders such as Yongbao and Huiling. However, it gave them a stronger excuse for more troops; Yongbao, Bi Yuan, and Jing'an all pleaded with the throne to send more reinforcements to Hubei.[147] Probably convinced that the gap left by Mingliang could only be filled with more and better troops, Qianlong conceded. He endorsed Jing'an's request for one thousand troops from Shanxi to be sent to the Henan-Hubei border to forestall the rebels' inroad into Henan. For Hubei, not only did Qianlong agree to send the four thousand Green Standard troops (two thousand each from Zhili and Shandong) requested by Yongbao, but he also decided to send one thousand bannermen from each of the two elite brigades in the capital, the Scouting Brigade and the

Firearms Brigade, instead of the five hundred bannermen from Jilin requested by the Hubei commanders.[148]

Those seven thousand reinforcements were the biggest deployment since the start of the rebellion. More significantly, this was the first time Manchu bannermen were deployed from outside the war zone (before only a few thousand Manchu bannermen from the Jingzhou and Xi'an garrisons had been used). Given that most uprisings in western Hubei had been put down—the only surviving ones were the Xiangyang force and the Lin-Tan force besieged in Changyang—Qianlong's shift from his earlier adamant position against using bannermen underscored his eagerness to wrap up the campaign quickly and his hope that a surge of military forces would do the job. It also shows that he had begun to be swayed by his field commanders, submitting to their loud and repeated pleas. Inevitably, the deployment of large numbers of troops from the north would hike war expenses greatly. In a few months after this deployment, several million taels of silver were sent to Hubei (a small portion of it to Henan). The campaign in Hubei was transformed into a major and costly undertaking for the dynasty. Likewise, corruption at the war front would become increasingly rampant.

By late 1796, 15,000 to 16,000 Qing troops including 2,000 elite bannermen from the capital, who were all mounted, had congregated in the Xiangyang area.[149] But no momentum had been gained; Yongbao and his cohorts failed to check the movements of the insurgents, whose number had dwindled to perhaps no more than ten thousand people, including families. Early in the eleventh month, the rebels crossed the Gun River and made a turn to the west, aiming at Guanghua and Gucheng. When they failed to make a foray to the west and to Henan as well, they turned back to Huanglongdang, the birthplace of their rebellion.[150] To Qianlong's great disappointment, Yongbao showed no determination, or even intention, to exterminate the rebels in the foreseeable future. Instead, his strategy was to use his large military force to loosely gird the rebels, stage offensives sporadically, but always allow them to break the siege and move to another spot. If Qianlong had believed before that Yongbao's pitiful record in the Xiangyang theater was largely due to insufficient forces, he no longer believed the excuses from Yongbao. The shrewd Qianlong easily detected that Yongbao and his cohorts were procrastinating. Yet he could not do much other than reprimand them harshly and repeatedly for not fighting the rebels wholeheartedly.[151]

Fortunately for the Qing state, there was one viceroy in the war zone who did not close his eyes to such behavior by the commanders. Being a distant relative of Hešen, Jing'an might have been emboldened in exposing his colleagues' unprofessional conduct.

Unlike Hešen, however, Jing'an earned the reputation of being impervious to money.[152] Sometimes, Jing'an's memorials on the battles in the Hubei-Henan border area arrived in Beijing ahead of those by Yongbao and others. Jing'an's frequent exposure of Yongbao's and other generals' treacherous conduct made him a thorn in their flesh. They would not give a hand when Jing'an was in a dangerous situation. On the last days of 1796, thousands of rebels tried to attack Dengzhou. When Jing'an and a few hundred troops were besieged by the rebels near Dengzhou, neither Yongbao nor Hengšui sent in a rescue force, even though both were nearby.[153] Immediately after this incident, Jing'an asked the throne to send back two thousand Henan troops who had been deployed to Hubei and were under Yongbao's command—he had learned that he could rely on no one else to protect him and his jurisdiction.[154]

By the end of the first year of the Jiaqing reign, Qianlong's patience and confidence in Yongbao had completely dissipated. He was convinced that it had been a mistake to have chosen him as the commander-in-chief and that the suppression campaign would not be finished any time soon should Yongbao stay in the position.[155] Qianlong first gave a symbolic penalty to all four generals at the Xiangyang front—Yongbao, Hengšui, Qingcheng, and Shuliang—by depriving them of their feather hat trappings. Then Qianlong ordered Huiling, who was then at the Huangbaishan front fighting the Lin-Tan force, to head to Xiangyang and to succeed Yongbao as commander-in-chief, becoming the first commander-in-chief who was a governor-general concurrently. He did, however, give Yongbao another chance to redeem himself: he could be pardoned if he annihilated the Xiangyang rebels before Huiling's arrival. When Jing'an reported at the beginning of 1797 that Yongbao had again failed to intercept the rebels, Qianlong ordered his immediate dismissal on Huiling's arrival. Shortly after the New Year in 1797 (January 28), Yongbao was arrested and escorted to Beijing for trial.[156]

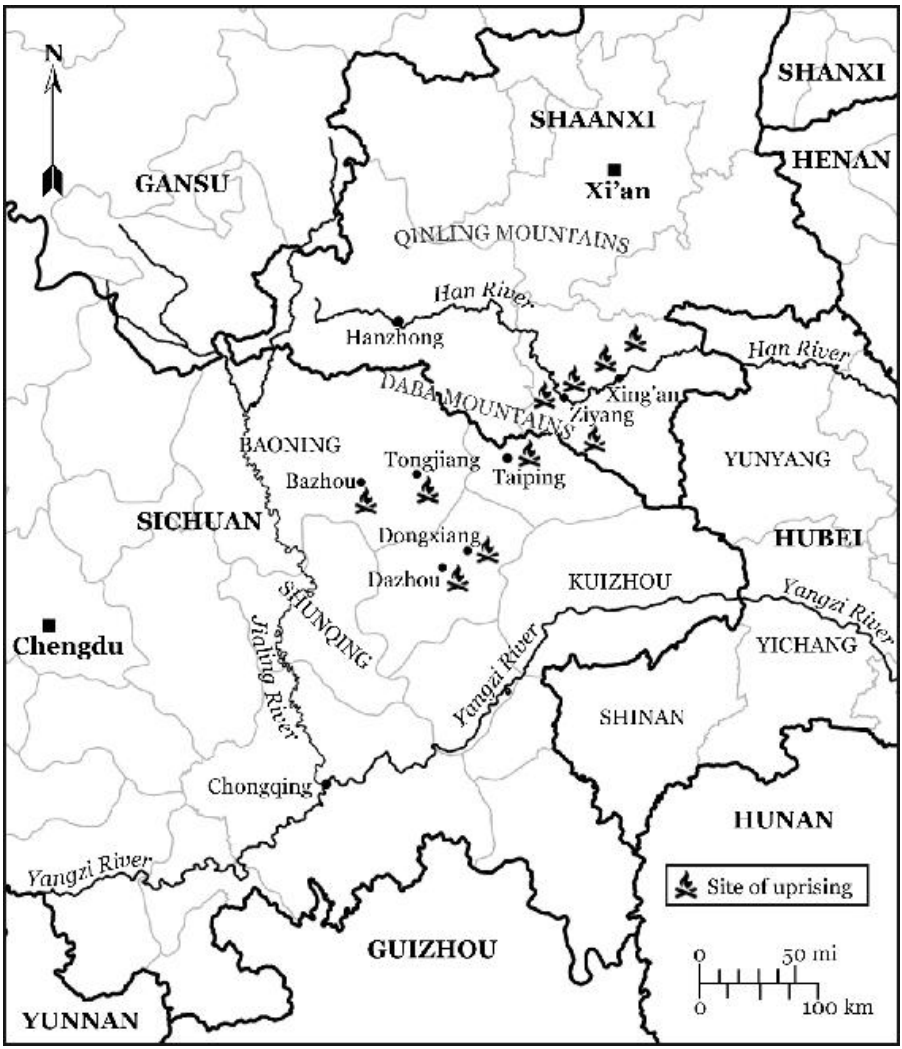
Contrary to Qianlong's expectation, however, Yongbao's removal, the first change of commander-in-chief in this campaign, discouraged rather than spurred the other generals in Xiangyang. When Huiling began to investigate Yongbao after he arrived in Xiangyang on 01/12/19, Hengšui, Qingcheng, and Shuliang failed to cooperate. Huiling soon reversed his position and defended Yongbao, arguing that he had not had sufficient forces and that the rebels were more familiar with the local conditions. Meanwhile, Huiling tried to clean the slate for those generals who had also been severely criticized by Qianlong for having not intervened when Yongbao dragged his feet in fighting the insurgents.[157] As revealed later, the commanders as well as some Hubei provincial officials had been bound together in their

profiteering from the war funds that had been allocated to Xiangyang in large quantities. By manipulating the logistical boss in Xiangyang, Hu Qilun, the generals and officials, including Mingliang and Ohūi, frequently received silver from Hu in the name of awards for soldiers or simply as gifts (Yongbao received the largest amount of such gifts). Perhaps hoping to keep Yongbao quiet about these acts, which were not known to the throne at this point, the Xiangyang clique continued courting Yongbao's favor even after his arrest. Bi Yuan sent thousands of taels from the war exchequers to Yongbao while he was imprisoned in Beijing and his home was searched and property confiscated. Not surprisingly, Huiling, the new commander-in-chief, would join the club soon, also receiving money from Hu Qilun.[158] Across the border in Henan, Jing'an, the lone critique of the campaign in Xiangyang and not part of the war fund scandal, was utterly isolated. Despite Jing'an's victory in exposing and ousting Yongbao, the war-front culture would remain the same, with or without Yongbao.

UPRISINGS IN SICHUAN

When western Hubei was engulfed in a wave of uprisings in the first half of 1796, Sichuan was intriguingly quiet. Although the Xiangyang sectarians had sent message carriers (*tonghuiren*) to eastern Sichuan to pass on their decision concerning the dragon day uprising, their counterparts in Dazhou subprefecture did not take action until the autumn.[159] Many sectarian followers there were Guolu bandits, salt smugglers, counterfeiters, and jobless drifters who had been given shelter in their wealthy sectarian patrons' homes; they might not have embraced the eschatology ingrained in the Hunyuan and Shouyuan teachings as enthusiastically as the pious believers. Not until the height of the uprisings in Hubei had passed and many Hubei rebels sought refuge with the sectarians in Dazhou were the Dazhou rebels spurred to action. In the ninth month, two uprisings occurred within a short distance from one another. The first took place on 01/09/15 in Tingzipu, 31 miles from the seat of Dazhou subprefecture, and was led by Xu Tiande, the sectarian master in Dazhou.[160] Allegedly, more than ten thousand people joined the uprising, including families and those from Hubei.[161] As the rebels carried black banners and clad themselves in black, instead of white as in Hubei, their band was referred to as the Black Band (Qinghao). Days after, Wang Sanhuai, a fortuneteller who had studied the sectarian teaching for several years and become radicalized because the local officials locked up his mother and other family members in their hunt for sectarians, led another uprising at Dongxiang's Lianchigou. Another key figure in the Dongxiang uprising was Leng Tianlu, a Dongxiang native who had been Wang Sanhuai's

sectarian teacher. Having gathered about seven hundred people, they led them to Fengcheng on 01/09/22 and set up forts there.[162] (Map 1.3.)



MAP 1.3. Locations of Uprisings in Sichuan and Shaanxi, 1796–1797.

The Sichuan provincial authorities were poorly positioned to respond to the uprisings. Although a large portion of their garrison troops had been sent to western Hunan for the Miao campaign, Sun Shiyi had led more than one thousand remaining troops to battle the rebels in Laifeng. After the Laifeng uprising was put down, those troops led by Guancheng, the Chengdu general, were sent to

Huangbaishan. In the city of Dazhou, only a few dozen Green Standard troops remained. Nevertheless, when Qianlong heard about the first uprising in Dazhou on 01/10/05, he was not too concerned, brushing it aside as a small incident: "The bandits in Dazhou are no more than a ragtag bunch; there is no need to make a fuss."[163] He merely urged Funing and Guancheng to send back a portion of the Sichuan force and agreed to send some Shaanxi troops to Dazhou.[164] At the same time, Sichuan officials also begged Mingliang and other generals in the Miao campaign to return Yuan Guohuang, the regional commander of Chongqing, and Yuan's five hundred soldiers. Although this request was answered positively, it took time for those Sichuan soldiers to reach the Dazhou front.[165] Ingšan, the acting governor-general of Sichuan, could only scramble for an expeditionary army of five hundred troops and hired two thousand civilians as militiamen on his way to Dazhou. On his arrival in Dazhou on 01/10/01, Ingšan called for the local residents to organize militias to battle the insurgents.[166] In fact, some local gentry members, both civil and military examination degree holders, had already been organizing militias for self-defense. The officials soon stepped in and commandeered many of the militiamen to aid the regular troops and then paid them with stipends and allowances. Although Hubei pioneered the coopting of militiamen as irregular soldiers, Sichuan soon surpassed Hubei in this endeavor in terms of scope and expenses.

In the tenth month, two more uprisings occurred in Bazhou and Tongjiang. Located on the southern slope of the Daba Mountains, Tongjiang and Bazhou were hilly and short of arable land but had extensive sectarian networks. After the two uprisings in Dazhou, the local authorities intensified their manhunt for sectarians in these two counties. Having been contacted by Xu Tiande's agents, Luo Qiqing, a cloth weaver (who had opened a restaurant shortly before the uprising because a recent drought had impaired his weaving craft) and sectarian chief in Bazhou, gathered over one thousand people and led an uprising at Fangshanping. Using white banners, Luo's rebel force was referred to as the White Band (Baihao). Almost simultaneously, in Tongjiang, Ran Wenchou and his nephew, Ran Tianyuan, staged another uprising. Because they used blue banners, their force became known as Blue Band (Lanhao).[167] In the years to come, many rebels from these two bands would turn out to be among the strongest and most effective in the rebellion.

With the help of the militias, the Sichuan forces managed to keep the rebels at bay. Four days after he arrived in Dazhou, Ingšan took Tingzipu from the rebels and then leveled the rebel forts one after another. Xu Tiande moved to Dongxiang after his son was killed guarding a strategic point. Xu's plan was to merge with Wang Sanhuai

and retreat into the mountains in Taiping, although joining forces with their counterparts in Hubei was also contemplated.[168] Located at the northeastern tip of Sichuan, Taiping was mountainous and sparsely populated. In the wake of the uprisings in Dazhou and Dongxiang, Sun Shifeng, also called Old Fifth Sun (Sun Laowu), the sectarian teacher from Hubei, brought about an uprising in Taiping.[169] The Sichuan rebels then sent agents to spark revolts in Shaanxi's Xing'an prefecture, a sectarian stronghold in which some minor uprisings had erupted but were swiftly put down earlier in 1796.[170] Qin Cheng'en, Shaanxi's governor, and Ke Fan immediately headed to Xing'an to tackle the new uprisings (the two had gone to Taiping to prevent the rebellion in Sichuan from spreading to Shaanxi). Meanwhile, Yimian, the governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, planned to lead an expedition of 2,750 troops to Dazhou to help his counterparts in Sichuan, for the unrest there threatened the stability in his province. Nevertheless, Yimian soon changed his itinerary; he had to stop in Xing'an to help his Shaanxi colleagues put down several uprisings that had just erupted.[171]

UPRISINGS IN SHAANXI

Compared with the campaigns in Hubei and Sichuan, the fighting in Xing'an was swift; all five uprisings were put down in two months. Like most rebels in Hubei, the rebels in Xing'an went up to the mountaintops and built forts and stockades. Being part of the Daba Mountains, the mountains in Xing'an were taller, steeper, and more perilous than those in southwestern Hubei. After Yimian joined Qin Cheng'en and Ke Fan, the Shaanxi forces first targeted the rebels at Anling, because it was close to the seat of Xing'an prefecture. They launched attacks from several directions and used fire grenades to burn down the rebel forts. In just two days in the mid-eleventh month, the Qing forces leveled the rebel stronghold, killing hundreds in the battle and capturing hundreds more, who were then killed.[172]

Right after this battle, the Shaanxi forces moved to tackle the rebels on the mountaintop at Jiangjunshan, north of the Han River and near a passage to Xi'an. As in the battle at Anling, the Qing troops forced their way up to the rebel forts along a steep and narrow mountain path and used fire grenades and cannons (that had been carried onto the mountain) to destroy the rebel forts. After several rebel chiefs were killed by cannon shells, the remaining thousand rebels surrendered. Many of the surrendered were executed, for they were deemed to have fought against the Qing troops and surrendered only when they had no choice.[173]

While Yimian and his cohorts were attacking the Jiangjunshan

forts, a dispatch led by Sofingga, regional commander of Suzhou in Gansu, was battling the rebels at Ziyang's Mixi, also on the north bank of the Han River, who had built their forts on hills surrounded by rice paddies. After a few days of fierce fighting, the surviving rebels burned their forts and retreated to a mountaintop for their final defiance. The troops cut off their water source and repelled a rebel rescue force from the south bank of the Han River. On 01/11/26, the remaining seven hundred-odd rebels surrendered. Again, many among those who surrendered were executed.[174]

After the battle of Mixi, Yimian and Ke Fan proceeded to Wuzuoyun, south of the Han River, from which the rebels had sent the rescue force to aid their brethren at Mixi. Wuzuoyun was especially perilous: the hill town was surrounded by five steep mountains, and there were three rivers—the Dong River, Ru River, and Dadao River—on the three sides of the mountains. In addition to Wuzuoyun's inaccessible location, the rebels had built an intricate defense system, including many forts on all possible passages to their headquarters on the hill in the middle of the five mountains. For days snowfall inhibited the Qing forces from launching attacks. However, they staged the showdown on 01/12/16, when it snowed even more heavily, which gave the rebels a surprise. Using their firearms, especially cannons they carried, the Qing forces were able to level their enemies' forts one by one. Unable to reach the rebel headquarters with their fire grenades, the troops used flame arrows to set the rebel headquarters ablaze. In four days, the Shaanxi forces, along with hundreds of militiamen from Hubei's Zhuxi, annihilated almost all the insurgents in this stronghold, thousands being either burned to death or killed. Only a few managed to escape, including a leader of this uprising, Wang Zijian, who was from Sichuan.[175]

After this battle, Yimian and Sofingga headed to Taiping and left the battle against the last uprising in Xing'an to Qin Cheng'en and Ke Fan. The last rebel stronghold was at Guangtoushan (meaning "bald-headed mountain") on Ankang's border with Taiping. Among the sea of mountains stood a high peak with steep cliffs on all sides and a huge basin on top, where the rebels built multiplex defensive facilities and semisubterranean ramparts as living cells. The rebel chief was Mrs. Wang née Liu (Wang Liu Shi), who was believed by her followers to be the "Eternal Mother." Because Yimian had taken a portion of the Shaanxi force to Sichuan, Qin and Ke recruited more militiamen locally. Interrupted by snowfall, the battle lasted about two weeks. The troops and militiamen first captured the rebel checkpoints. Then they installed cannons on hills across from Guangtoushan and shelled the rebels' wooden forts ablaze. On 02/01/25, the Qing forces crushed the rebel headquarters. Allegedly over two thousand rebels and their

families, including Mrs. Wang herself, were killed either in battle or in the fire. Two hundred more were arrested, including several of Mrs. Wang's deputies, who were subsequently executed by "a thousand cuts."[176] Southern Shaanxi was thus cleared of uprisings.

A BLOODY SPRING

Meanwhile, the situation in Sichuan was deteriorating for the suppressors. In Bazhou and Tongjiang, the Blue and White Bands fortified themselves on mountaintops with ease since the Qing side did not have spare forces to deal with them. At the beginning of 1797, Luo Qiqing led his men and attacked the city of Bazhou. They failed to take the city but killed a few lower-ranking officers.[177] The Dazhou insurgents maintained their momentum. In the late eleventh month, they battled with the Qing forces at Dongxiang's Hengshanzi for days and then made a surprise attack on the Qing forts in an early morning, in which they nearly annihilated all the hundreds of troops and killed Yuan Guohuang, a decorated officer, and He Yuanqing, the new regional commander of the Xing'an-Hanzhong command.[178] Having just arrived in eastern Sichuan (Yuan returning from the Miao campaign and He from the Huangbaishan front), they were the first high-ranking officers to die in this campaign.[179]

This fiasco alerted Qianlong to the seriousness of the conflict in northeastern Sichuan and the need to send a more experienced commander than Ingšan. Qianlong ordered Yimian, whose recent victories in Shaanxi had won his approval, to lead the campaign in Sichuan and urged Funing and Guancheng to finish their siege at Huangbaishan swiftly and then go to Sichuan. Shortly after, Qianlong changed his mind; he ordered Guancheng and five hundred troops to return to Sichuan immediately.[180] However, before the reinforcements arrived, Xu Tiande and Wang Sanhuai attacked the seat of Dongxiang county and took it on 01/12/29, two days before the New Year. A number of Qing officers and clerks who had been recruited from other provinces to help the campaign were killed. Most alarming to the Qing, Fozhu, the former vice commander-in-chief of the Chengdu banner garrison who had volunteered to return to Sichuan to fight the rebels when he was on his way to his new appointment in Xinjiang, was captured and then killed by the rebels, becoming the first high-ranking bannerman to die in the war.[181]

Despite his knowledge of the fall of Dongxiang, Yimian decided to clear thousands of insurgents in Taiping first when he entered Sichuan the day after New Year. In Taiping, the insurgents led by He Ruhui, a disciple of Old Fifth Sun (Sun had headed to Dongxiang for reinforcements on hearing of Yimian's approach from Shaanxi), had

fortified themselves in three strongholds with short distances between them. Since he had sent Sofingga and a thousand troops to Dongxiang and the reinforcements he had ordered from Gansu had not arrived, Yimian recruited more militiamen and assigned the civil officials on his staff to lead them. On 02/01/07, Yimian attacked all three rebel strongholds at once. The troops and militiamen shelled the rebels' ramparts on steep cliffs and threw flame grenades into them. Once the forts were on fire and the rebels were in disarray, the Qing forces broke in. In one week, all three strongholds were leveled, and most insurgents were either killed or caught (He Ruihui was captured a few days after the fight).[182] For the time being, peace was restored in Taiping.

Having arrived at Dongxiang on 02/02/05, Yimian was joined by Minghing, a palace guardsman and Mingliang's elder brother, and his five hundred troops. Since the city of Dongxiang had no walls, the rebels had fortified themselves on several mountaintops. As Yimian and Minghing were approaching, they abandoned two forts and assembled their main forces in three strongholds near the city. About the same time, Ran Wenchou and his several thousand insurgents built ramparts on a mountaintop at Wangjiazhai, not far from Luo Qiqing's stronghold at Fangshanping. Therefore, Yimian detailed to Wangjiazhai Besiyang and several thousand troops. To aid their brethren, Xu Tiande led thousands of his men and headed to Wangjiazhai, which weakened the rebel force at Zhangjiaguan, a height overlooking Dongxiang. On 02/02/10, Yimian attacked Zhangjiaguan, using flame arrows to set the rebel ammunition storehouse ablaze and cause it to explode, which forced the rebels to abandon this stronghold and disperse. Yimian and Minghing then retook the city of Dongxiang. Meanwhile, Xu Tiande was intercepted by the Qing forces on his way to Ran's rescue. Xu and his men retreated to their other two strongholds in Dongxiang on learning of the loss of Zhangjiaguan.[183] One of their strongholds, at Qingxichang, could accommodate several thousand people, and the other at Jin'esi (meaning "gold peak temple") was spacious enough to shelter many more and extremely difficult to access, with cliffs on three sides. Encountering strenuous resistance from the insurgents, who at times even mounted attacks on their enemy's base, the Qing forces did not proceed as smoothly in taking these two strongholds.[184]

At this moment, the two-year campaign against the Miao rebels in Hunan and Guizhou was nearing its end, thanks to Mingliang's joining the campaign in late 1796. Troops there were redeployed to eastern Sichuan. Zhu Shedou, the regional commander of Chuanbei command, Sichuan, and his two thousand troops had returned early, just in time for the battle to recover Dongxiang. Early in the third month,

Mingliang and Delengtai, a Mongol bannerman and palace guardsman, arrived in Dazhou with three thousand Sichuan soldiers and three thousand Yunnan soldiers.[185] Ke Fan and his Shaanxi force also arrived after having put down the last uprising in southern Shaanxi. Totaling about twenty thousand, the Qing forces mounted a showdown against the rebel strongholds.[186]

Although Qianlong had made good use of Mingliang, shuttling him from one hot spot to another in the two campaigns, he did not pass up an opportunity to pick on him. Qianlong reprimanded Mingliang for taking Yimian's credit by placing his name ahead of Yimian's in a memorial reporting a battle at Jin'esi. He thus granted rewards and gifts to all commanders except Mingliang. More adversely for Mingliang, Qianlong ordered him to go to Hubei to "assist" Huiling, without bringing his troops. To Mingliang's advantage, Yimian was his longtime friend. The two had studied together in their childhood, then both went to the second Jinchuan war, and they later were colleagues in Xinjiang. As Yimian acknowledged: "We have been extremely close and treated each other with utmost candidness on everything." Yimian entreated Qianlong to keep Mingliang in Sichuan because Mingliang's military acumen and experience were far superior to his own, and the rebels in Sichuan were much fiercer than those in Shaanxi. Before Yimian's passionate plea reached the court, however, Qianlong had already changed his mind. He let Mingliang stay put, perhaps realizing that the campaign in Sichuan might not end any time soon without him.[187]

On 02/04/03, Mingliang led an all-out attack on Jin'esi and Qingxichang. They destroyed the Qingxichang stronghold and caught one of the rebel chiefs, Wang Xueli. At Jin'esi, Wang Sanhuai led a few thousand able-bodied rebels and charged the Qing attackers at dusk, while Xu Tiande led their families in rolling down the cliff at the back of the mountain and making their way to their forts at Chongshizi. The following day, the Qing forces took Jin'esi, but Wang Sanhuai managed to escape. Afterward, more than twenty thousand rebels congregated mainly at Dongxiang's Chongshizi and Xiangluping.[188] In Bazhou, the Qing forces leveled the Wangjiazhai stronghold in the middle of the fourth month and repelled the reinforcements sent by Luo Qiqing. However, the surviving insurgents led by Ran Wenchou made their way to Luo's stronghold at Fangshanping, although the two bands did not merge.[189]

Believing that the captured Wang Xueli was the brain of the Dazhou rebels, his captors had him write a letter to call on his comrades to surrender. Pretending to be persuaded by Wang's exhortation, the insurgents sent a few members (they claimed that one of them was Wang Sanhuai) to the Qing camp to negotiate. The two

sides reached a deal: all rebel leaders were to go to Shuangmiaochang, or "Twin Temple Mart," on 02/04/18 and surrender. On the scheduled day, thousands of Qing troops were arranged near the rendezvous, attempting to attack the rebel headquarters when their leaders were out. Meanwhile, the insurgents also hid thousands of their men in a nearby valley in the hope that they could find a chance to rescue Wang Xueli. However, each side soon detected the other's scheme; a would-be truce was turned into a battle. Wang Sanhuai, who was among the group heading to the rendezvous, escaped, but Wang Xueli was executed afterward.[190] Devastated by his death, the rebels staged ferocious offensives in the following days and even attempted, at one point, to take the city of Dazhou, but all those attacks were frustrated as the Qing forces were there taking their checkpoints one by one.[191] Entering the fifth month, as their supplies in both strongholds were running out, the insurgents tried to break out. In one of the attempts, Wang Sanhuai was injured and barely survived when another rebel chief gave his own horse to him.[192]

At the conclusion of the Miao campaign, four thousand Guangdong and Guangxi troops were redeployed to Sichuan, as requested by Mingliang and Delengtai.[193] On 02/05/26, the reinforced Qing forces staged a showdown in Dongxiang. They first set the ramparts at Chongshizi ablaze with their firearms; thousands of rebels and their families were burned to death. At Xiangluping, the rebels managed to hold out for half a day and to charge their enemy several times before Mingliang and his men forced their way to the mountaintop and shot flaming arrowheads into their forts. Fire overwhelmed the entire stronghold and burned thousands to death. The Qing armies then pursued and fought the surviving insurgents on the following day. In this battle, arguably the deadliest one in Sichuan, ten thousand people were allegedly killed—and the troops had cut off more than two thousand heads.[194]

After this fiasco, the surviving rebels camped near Jingzhongsi, or "Loyalty Shrine," in two groups. Early in the sixth month, Mingliang and others smashed the group led by Xu Tiande and Wang Sanhuai, but the Qing side also lost several officers, including a decorated Manchu bannerman, Xijintai.[195] Despite the rebels' gallantry—braving Qing cannons and gunfire, they charged the Qing forces frenziedly—they were in disarray, abandoning their equipment and dependents; both Xu's and Wang's mothers were among the captured. Shortly later, Wang Sanhuai's wife and daughter were also captured; only two thousand or fewer were left in the Xu-Wang group. Meanwhile, Delengtai annihilated the other group of about one thousand people and killed its leader, Old Fifth Sun.[196] At Bazhou's Fangshanping, the Blue and White Bands were faced with shortages of supplies. They

tried to break out, and they sent insurgents several times to harvest wheat and beans in nearby fields, but none of them were successful.[197] However, the Qing force led by Besiyang besieging Fangshanping did not put enough pressure on the rebels, and the rebels were able to plant crops on the mountaintop, which was flat and expansive, as its name suggests (Fangshanping means "square mountain plain").[198] By the summer of 1797, local residents of Dazhou, Xinning, and Taiping who had left to avoid turmoil returned home and resumed agricultural work with subsidies provided by the government. Even people from some places in Dongxiang and Bazhou returned home, since hostilities were contained in the mountains.[199]

REBELS AND SUPPRESSORS

The rebellion was ebbing by the summer of 1797. Except for the Xiangyang force trekking to Sichuan and the Lin Zhihua–Tan Jiayao group that was wandering in Hubei's southwestern corner (see next chapter), all other uprisings in Hubei had been suppressed. In Sichuan, with most of its original followers lost, the Dazhou rebellion had been largely destroyed. The Blue and White Bands had been under siege in Bazhou, unable to make any offensive move. In southern Shaanxi, all five uprisings were crushed in a matter of a couple of months, making it one of the most successful chapters in the Qing suppression campaign. Although the sectarian leaders timed their rebellion adeptly by taking advantage of the Qing campaign against the Miao people in Guizhou and Hunan, and they were successful in synchronizing uprisings at different spots in Hubei, the lack of strong leadership doomed their cause from the beginning.

First and foremost, Liu Zhixie's desertion on the eve of the rebellion was consequential. With no other sectarian leader enjoying a reputation comparable to Liu's, the insurgents never produced a leader who could commander all the bands. Meanwhile, the leaders of all of the uprisings in the three provinces failed to capitalize on their followers' enthusiastic response to their call to arms or to clarify and promulgate their agenda in any form. Almost all the uprisings abandoned the political aspiration of founding a new regime, which had been central to the prophecies of the Hunyuan and Shouyuan sects—only the rebels in Xiangyang and Changyang had adopted their own reign names respectively, but neither was really in use.[200] Likewise, there was a lack of indignation at the alien Manchu rulers, let alone nationalistic messages to draw participants. As the Jiaqing emperor commented in 1800: "All the bandit chiefs, such as Yao Zhifu, Ms. Qi née Wang, Wang Sanhuai, Ran Tianyuan, Gao Junde, Zhang Hanchao, and others, only went amok and looted for survival.

However, they did not dare to set up a rebel regime and occupy cities with an intent of committing a great treason."[201]

The Sichuan rebels were both vague in their political agenda and localized in their strategy. Although they identified themselves as part of the sectarian movement centered on Xiangyang and desired at some early points to join their counterparts in Hubei, they were reluctant to leave their home region. Some of their counterparts in Hubei also exhibited this inclination.[202]

Unlike the Taiping rebels half a century later, the White Lotus rebels did not set up an army par excellence. As in sectarian rebellions before, many bands conferred titles such as "marshal," (*yuanshuai*), "commander" (*zongbing*), "vanguard" (*xianfeng*), banner bearer (*qishou*), and head scout (*tanmatou*) on their chiefs, but there lacked a hierarchical structure with those positions.[203] Instead of separating their fighting regiments from the families, the rebels only loosely designated able-bodied men as "fighters" (*zhanshou*) or "spearmen" (*maoshou*) but did not organize them in any units. There were always numerous women among them. Although many women were involved in fighting and leadership, such as Wang Conger of Xiangyang and Mrs. Wang née Liu in southern Shaanxi, most of the female insurgents were in families—captured women were often taken by the leaders as their consorts. In battles, the families always suffered far heavier casualties and were prone to be abandoned in urgent and dangerous situations. It was common for the Qing forces to capture the family members of the rebel leaders before capturing the leaders themselves. Later in the war, male rebels even killed their women and children in order to move faster.

Lack of strong leadership aside, the insurgents displayed no farsighted and feasible strategy in battling their suppressors. Poorly organized and equipped, they were weak in acquiring territories and taking cities or towns. A case in point is their failed siege of Fangxian, guarded by only one hundred troops. Even with their initial momentum following the eruption of the uprising in Xiangyang, the rebels failed to take the twin cities of Fancheng and Xiangyang. Although the rebels in Dangyang held the city for five months, the prolonged siege had more to do with the ineffectiveness of the Qing forces than the rebels' strength.[204]The other cities that fell to the insurgents (often because the cities had no walls), such as Baokang and Zhushan in the valley of the Wudang Mountains and Dongxiang in Sichuan, were only held briefly before the Qing forces recovered them. In fact, almost all of the uprisings were besieged by the Qing force as soon as they started. Consequently, the rebel groups had to struggle for survival rather than stage concerted actions to expand their rebellion. Except in the case of the Xiangyang rebel force, the

common method for survival was to head to a nearby mountaintop and hole up.[205] Ironically, "strengthening the walls" was the main tactic of the insurgents in the first stage of the conflict. Taking advantage of geographic barriers and the intricate yet primitive fortifications they made—they usually built several layers of stockades, stored rolling logs and stones for throwing, sometimes surrounded their fortresses with moats, and dug up all roads or placed land mines there—the rebels and their families could hold out for some time. The Qing forces' procrastination sometimes helped prolong their survival. But the shortage of supplies as well as water in some cases would finally compromise the advantage of their mountaintop tactic. In addition, their fortresses were largely built of flammable materials, vulnerable to incendiary warfare waged by the enemy.

In retrospect, the Xiangyang rebels' failure to capture the city of Xiangyang was not entirely detrimental to them because they could avoid what befell their counterparts in other places: to be besieged, exhausted, and conquered. Having no mountaintop or city to hold, the Xiangyang insurgents resorted to mobility. From the summer of 1796, they employed this tactic proficiently. Not only did they move constantly and rapidly; they also frequently divided their force into groups to divert their suppressors' attention. During the first half of 1797, their mobile warfare would give them an edge over the Qing forces pursuing them, often disorienting their suppressors. In addition, their movements, as noted by the Qing officials, had helped them recruit new blood to boost their shrinking ranks when they passed through sectarian enclaves in western Hubei, southern Henan, and southern Shaanxi.[206] Some sectarians might not have been tempted to take action if they had only heard about uprisings elsewhere but would more likely be swayed when the rebels reached their doorsteps.

Besides recruiting sectarians and other willing candidates to join the rebellion, the rebels invariably resorted to coercion to expand their ranks. They sometimes applied a scorched earth policy or killed people who refused to join them.[207] In the Laifeng uprising, the crowd reached tens of thousands, most of which were captured local residents. Until 1801, this method of coercing civilians was chiefly responsible for the wide fluctuation in the size of the rebel forces. To prevent the coerced civilians from deserting, the rebels sometimes branded the characters "White Lotus" (Bailian) or "White Lotus teaching" (Balianjiao) on their faces, a timeless method used by rebels of different times.[208] In battle, those coerced rebels were used either as vanguards to engage the Qing forces first or as human shields when the rebels retreated behind them, a tactic also used by rebels in the past.[209] Even though they were closely watched and marshaled on the battlefield, the coerced civilians were more inclined to desert or

surrender and rarely converted into committed rebels, although they were the majority of the "rebels" killed, of which the throne had been fully aware from early in the campaign.[210]

The Qing state, from the emperor to the officials at the front, did not view the uprisings in the three provinces as serious incidents initially. Huiling called the rebels in the Yidu-Zhijiang uprising "ragtags" (*wuhezhizhong*)—a term echoed by many others, including the Qianlong emperor, and underlining the state's reluctance to send more bannermen to the front.[211] Therefore, most uprisings in Hubei were put down by local forces aided by limited reinforcements from Shaanxi and several other provinces. The first large reinforcements from the north and the capital, including two thousand elite bannermen, were not deployed until late 1796. Taking advantage of their firearms—cannons, guns, muskets, land mines, grenades, flamethrowers, flame arrows—which were far superior to the rebels' homemade weapons, the Qing local forces could destroy the rebel forts with ease, although they sometimes waited for the rebels to become exhausted before their showdown. Mingliang demonstrated in both Hubei and Sichuan that he was no less valiant and effective than he had been in the heyday of the Qing frontier expansion. Meanwhile, the Shaanxi regiment sent to Hubei, led by Hengšui and including one thousand bannermen from the Xi'an banner garrison, also displayed their worth in quickly cracking down on the uprisings in the southern foothills of the Wudang Mountains. Neither Mingliang nor Hengšui made use of the hired militias in Hubei. Nor were they deterred by the inclement climate or challenging geographic conditions.

In southern Shaanxi, where the Qing armies had spent years clearing bandits in the beginning of the dynasty, the steep mountains and a snowy season did not hamper the Qing campaign led by Yimian, also a veteran of the second Jinchuan campaign, to crush the five uprisings. Led by the same Yimian, the fight in Taiping to level the rebel forts on high cliffs was also effective. Thanks to the cooperation between Yimian and Mingliang, the campaign in Sichuan in the first half of 1797 proceeded favorably for the Qing, pushing the Dazhou rebellion to the edge of being extinguished. The result of the suppression campaign in the first stage shows that the Qing military was not impotent. Under the right leadership, they could be as robust as they had been in the early and high Qing periods, capable of crushing uprisings promptly even when geography and climate were not in their favor. The Qing regiments from Shaanxi were generally noticeably more capable than those from other provinces except for Guizhou.

The Qing campaign was in general cold-blooded and at times abhorrent. In battle, Qing troops killed both rebels and coerced

civilians indiscriminately. Following battle, the massacring of captives, including women, the elderly, and children, was commonplace. For captured rebel chiefs, except for those who were sent to Beijing for further interrogation, the Qing forces everywhere lavishly used the method of "death by a thousand cuts" or worse to execute them.[212] When reporting to the throne how many captives they had executed, often in the hundreds, the commanders usually justified it, in a routine and casual tone, by declaring that the slaughtered were diehard insurgents. Except for Funing's slaughtering of nearly two thousand surrendered rebels after the battle at Laifeng's Qiguzhai, which was investigated after Jiaqing's takeover, none of other atrocities ever came under scrutiny.[213] In fact, Yimian and his colleagues in Shaanxi surpassed their counterparts in Hubei in massacring captives following their conquest of each of the five rebel strongholds, as detailed above. After Yimian and Ingšan recovered the city of Dongxiang from the rebels, they executed more than four hundred captured rebels, about which Qianlong wrote "good" on their memorial.[214]

Although the Qianlong emperor had never frowned on the slaughtering of captives, he did try, from the beginning of the campaign, to oblige his commanders to make distinctions between the sectarian rebels and those who had been forced to join. While he made it clear that only the former deserved capital punishment, he was not entirely consistent with the treatment of the latter. At times, he mentioned that they could be punished by making them slaves of the bannermen. On other occasions, he thought that they should not be penalized as long as they surrendered and showed repentance.[215] Nevertheless, what Qianlong preached had little bearing at the front. Few heeded his repeated calls to be discreet and distinguish between true rebels and those who had been seduced or coerced; the cold-blooded slaughtering of captives would continue in years to come. Consequently, many rebels chose not to surrender, knowing that they would be killed anyway. Meanwhile, another directive of the emperor was not closely followed, either. Shortly after the rebellion started, Qianlong endorsed a suggestion by Sun Shiyi and ordered his troops to relax the manhunt for the sectarians in Hubei, Henan, and Sichuan in order to rally the populace's support for the Qing campaign.[216] However, sectarian members who did not join the rebellion were still subject to persecution by local authorities, which helped drive some of them to the rebel ranks.[217]

By the summer of 1797, the Qing forces had obtained a clear upper hand in battling the rebels everywhere except for their losing pursuit of the Xiangyang force from Hubei to southern Shaanxi, as will be recounted in the next chapter. It was therefore not unrealistic for the

Qing state to believe that the rebellion could be completely put down in a few months. Nevertheless, the question was not whether the Qing forces were capable of wiping out the insurgents speedily but whether they were motivated to do so. As Yongbao's case suggests, the commanders would prefer not to annihilate them all at once but rather use them as bait for more funds, rewards, and promotions. Although military personnel, both officers and soldiers, had always been entitled to higher compensation and more awards when deployed to a war, Qianlong was prone to lavish additional monetary incentives to boost their morale in the first stage of the White Lotus War, as he had done in other wars during his long reign. For instance, he liberally granted one-month stipends to all troops following every reported victory, sometimes not even major ones or not real victories. At times he even awarded two-month stipends to some or even all involved in a battle. Or he gave out the one-month stipend before a battle was fought.[218] Chances of receiving illegitimate benefits such as bribes from the logistical staff and local officials or embezzling the war fund were also abundant for commanders.

As a result, some commanders did not have the motivation to eliminate all the insurgents swiftly and at once, since a prolonged campaign against the same rebel group might give rise to many opportunities for claiming promotions and rewards. This mindset also encouraged falsification of battle results as well as indiscriminate killing, since the number of the killed rebels was often the most important yardstick for receiving rewards. Even Qianlong realized that he should not believe all the reported figures.[219] In Hubei, especially in putting down the Yidu-Zhijiang uprising and the Changyang uprising, the Qing commanders failed to break down the rebels' mountaintop strongholds quickly but dragged their sieges on for months even though the degree of difficulty of the geography did not match that in southern Shaanxi. Although the commanders would be sanctioned if they failed to do their jobs, as Yongbao's downfall shows, the generals continued procrastinating, probing the limits of the system even after Yongbao was cashiered. Starting from late 1796, the central government endorsed large amounts of war funds for the Hubei theater, which further whetted the generals' appetites for wartime income, lawful or unlawful. Unlike in Hubei, however, Shaanxi and Sichuan did not receive any extra funds from Beijing in the first year. As the financial costs of delays in crushing those revolts fell on the shoulders of the provincial authorities, the Qing commanders in Shaanxi and Sichuan, who were also provincial viceroys, such as Yimian and Ingšan, might have been more motivated to bring the campaign to its end. Nevertheless, things were soon to change. With more troops deployed to Sichuan in the spring of 1797,

the war stewardship in Sichuan requested and then received large amounts of war funds from the central government; Sichuan would soon surpass Hubei in expenditures, as it would in misappropriating war funds. At the same time, efficacy would be replaced with procrastination.

CHAPTER 2

QUAGMIRE
1797–1798

> Lebao leads massive forces and has besieged the debilitated bandits for several months, but he has not made any progress, procrastinating and taking his duty lightly. What is his intent? … Ask yourself on a quiet night: do you still have a conscience?
>
> —THE RETIRED QIANLONG EMPEROR, 1798

WHILE the Sichuan insurgents were struggling for survival, the Xiangyang rebel force, after having trekked through Henan and Shaanxi, managed to cross the Han River and meet with their beaten brethren in northeastern Sichuan in the summer of 1797. Infuriated by his troops' failure to stop them, the Qianlong emperor replaced Huiling with Yimian as commander-in-chief. However, the meeting of the Xiangyang rebels and their Sichuan counterparts did not become a tipping point in the waning rebellion, contrary to what had been feared by the Qing side. Unable to take root in northern Sichuan, Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger led their core force back to Hubei shortly after. After trekking and fighting in Hubei, Shaanxi, and Sichuan for months, this force, perhaps the most potent among all the rebel bands, was annihilated in the spring of 1798. Nevertheless, its demise did not mark the beginning of the end of the rebellion. The war continued in eastern Sichuan and southern Shaanxi, and most insurgents adopted guerrilla warfare. In late 1797, Lebao, Yongbao's elder brother, was appointed as the new commander-in-chief, which was the third reshuffling of the campaign leadership within one year. However, Lebao soon proved to be a master of delay tactics. Under his auspices, the campaign progressed at an excessively slow pace; some commanders developed strategies to procrastinate while fishing for personal gains. Chagrined by Lebao's leadership, Mingliang also

deliberately slowed down. By the time Qianlong's health started to fail in late 1798, the campaign had descended into a quagmire.

THE XIANGYANG REBELS' LONG MARCH TO SICHUAN

Despite their pathetic performance in fighting the Xiangyang rebel force in late 1796, the Qing armies, with their overwhelming superiority in size and weaponry, made it impossible for the insurgents to stay in their home region. Shuttling between Xiangyang prefecture and Henan's Nanyang prefecture, about twelve thousand rebels kept dividing into smaller groups and then coalescing. Their guerrilla tactics forced their suppressors to parcel out their troops to guard passes and roads, weakening their ability to confront the rebel forces head on.[1] In the first month of 1797, however, the insurgents were trapped in the area north of Guanghua. When they tried to break out in three groups, Huiling and his cohorts executed several all-out offensives and inflicted high casualties on the rebels, drastically reducing their number, perhaps to only several thousand. In disarray, many rebels abandoned their family members or deserted and returned home. Local officials set up relief shelters to register and settle those who submitted to the authorities.[2] (Map 2.1.)

With their numbers dwindling, the rebels sent out agents to call back the scattered and deserted and to instigate new uprisings. Unable to go into towns and villages to contact people, the agents sometimes attached brief messages to strings of copper coins and left them on roads. However, their efforts bore little success. Wang Xin, Hubei's governor, claimed that he had captured and executed all the agents sent to the Xiangyang area.[3] The only known response to the call to arms was an aborted uprising in the first month in Henan's Xichuan and Neixiang, where a few sectarian leaders gathered one thousand people for an uprising. However, Jing'an rushed to the spot and arrested over a hundred people before the uprising even took place.[4]

Having failed to generate new momentum in Hubei, the Xiangyang leaders decided to take a long trek to northern Sichuan and join forces with the insurgents there, as they had heard about the uprisings in Sichuan and, more important, that their counterparts in Sichuan were large in number and the terrain there was to their advantage—precipitous and difficult for their suppressors to conquer.[5] But the Xiangyang insurgents had to make a huge detour because the Qing forces had been lined up along their way in northwestern Hubei.[6] Late in the second month, they moved eastward to the Tongbai Mountains on the border with Henan; their dispatches reached as far as Yingcheng, Huangpi, and Huang'an, the easternmost points the rebellion had ever touched, which generated enough alarm to

mobilize that part of Hubei for self-defense.[7] Not attempting to move farther east, the Xiangyang force began moving north to penetrate Henan in three divisions, led respectively by Wang Tingzhao, Li Shu, and Yao Zhifu (Wang Conger, who had emerged to be increasingly instrumental in setting the direction for the rebellion, was with Yao). Yao especially instructed the leaders not to fight the Qing forces but to concentrate on getting out.[8]



MAP 2.1. The Xiangyang Rebels' Long March to Sichuan. Arrows show the rebels' movements from Hubei to Sichuan via Henan and Shaanxi.

In the third month, all three groups entered Henan, sparking off alarms for the Henan authorities.[9] Jing'an had to stretch his limited troops to an extended battle line and shuttled himself from one spot to another trying to check the spread of the rebellion in his province. Apparently not adept at military operations, Jing'an worked cautiously. Having alienated himself from his peers in his fight against the deceitful conduct of some commanders and his aid in taking down Yongbao, Jing'an became a target for slander. He was later accused of being a coward and failing to prevent the rebels from going to Shaanxi via his province.[10] In fact, Huiling and other generals fared no better; not only did they fail to exterminate the Xiangyang rebels in Henan, but they were also unsuccessful in impeding their movements there. All three rebel divisions moved swiftly toward Henan's border with Shaanxi, albeit with turns and detours.[11]

At the end of the third month, Wang Tingzhao and Li Shu took the

Wuguan pass, and infiltrated into Shaanxi's Shangzhou prefecture, a gateway to Xi'an. In Shangzhou, the two groups merged, and thousands of local sectarians joined them.[12] After the merged and augmented regiment reached Shanyang and Zhen'an, it turned back to the east and entered Hubei's northwestern tip, perhaps to recruit the sectarians there. On 02/04/07, the rebels took the city of Yunxi, which did not have walls and was guarded by only a few dozen troops and militiamen. However, they held it for only one day before it was recaptured by Qingcheng.[13] The division led by Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger, whose left arm had been injured in a battle, took a longer route in Henan, thus entering Shaanxi a few days later than the other two.[14] When it reached Shanyang's Gaobadian, the merged Wang-Li force had headed toward Yunxi. Hengšui, who had been pursuing the Yao-Wang group from Hubei, was far from the rebels.[15]

With the Qing forces far behind, the Yao-Wang division enjoyed a peaceful break for weeks in the fourth month. Although the insurgents had been absorbing new blood along their trek, nowhere did they have such success as in poverty-stricken southeastern Shaanxi, where the sectarian networks were entrenched but there had been no new agitation after several uprisings in Xing'an were put down in early 1797. Many sectarians had signed guarantees with the local authorities not to involve themselves in revolts. However, the arrival of the Xiangyang insurgents rekindled the local sectarians' zeal. When the Yao-Wang force sent their men to reach out to them, thousands enthusiastically responded. Uprisings were held by small crowds of dozens or hundreds here and there; some even burned down their own houses and brought their entire families to join the rebellion. When the merged Wang-Li group returned from Yunxi and met with the Yao-Wang division late in the month, their total number might have exceeded twenty thousand.[16] With their ranks dramatically swelled, the rebels underwent some reorganization, setting up Black, White, Yellow and Blue Bands, with a "marshal" to lead each.[17]

When southwestern Henan was under siege, Huiling's numerous requests for reinforcements were finally answered. Qianlong ordered two thousand soldiers from Shanxi to be sent to Shaanxi's Shangzhou to join four hundred Manchu bannermen from Shaanxi who had been sent there earlier by Qin Cheng'en.[18] Once the Xiangyang insurgents entered Shaanxi, the provincial authorities scrambled for all available forces, including two thousand troops deployed from Ningxia and Xining, which brought the total regular forces fighting the Xiangyang force to more than twenty thousand.[19] Until he was informed of the expansion of the rebel ranks in Shaanxi, the Qianlong emperor had believed that the rebellion had neared its end, as the last few thousand Hubei insurgents had been cornered in southeastern Shaanxi by his

heavy forces. Having been emboldened by the prospect of a victory near at hand, Qianlong bitterly reproached his commanders. In two edicts in the mid-fourth month, he pointedly questioned all their usual excuses for not being able to annihilate the already broken insurgents or even stop their movements, such as insufficient forces, troops being too tired, lack of supplies, and so on. He wondered what had gone wrong after he sent tens of thousands of troops and more than 30 million taels of silver to the front and assigned chief commanders for each of the three battlegrounds—Huiling in Xiangyang, Yimian in Dazhou, and Eldemboo and Funing at Huangbaishan. Urging the commanders to consider the image of the dynasty and the people's suffering, which had been exacerbated with the lapse of time even if the enormous financial cost could be put aside, Qianlong enjoined his generals to give him a clear timeline for finishing the campaign or provide sound explanations for why they could not.[20]

The old emperor's open display of wrath sounded an encouraging signal to those court officials who had been following the campaign closely. Song Shu, a young censor, submitted a memorial soon after relentlessly dissecting all the suspicious phenomena in the execution of the campaign. He questioned how it was possible that a revolt by merely a few thousand people could have lasted for so long if tens of thousands of them had been killed. He ridiculed Bi Yuan for his premature proclamation of the start of post-bellum reconstruction (*shanhou*) in late 1796, which was soon followed by the news that the rebels had run amok again, first going to Henan and then to Shaanxi. Citing precedents from the frontier wars of the Qianlong period, Song urged the emperor to appoint a supreme commander to oversee the entire campaign and to send more capable generals to the front so that there would be no further delays and mutual blaming. Song also condemned the commanders for having turned the campaign into a mill of promotions and awards, and he proposed severely punishing the commanders who failed to meet their obligations.[21] Song Shu's unforgiving criticism must have reflected other officials' opinions and the discussions among them. Apparently, it was no secret in the capital that the reports from the front were not all credible and that the commanders had not done their best to fight the rebels but used the campaign for personal gain. Qianlong ordered copies of Song's memorial sent to the commanders, adding a severe warning to Huiling with a reminder of Yongbao's downfall.[22] In the weeks to come, Qianlong continued to chide Huiling, calling him even worse than Yongbao.[23]

Not until early in the fifth month did Huiling scramble to put together an attack on the rebels at Zhen'an's Huanglongpu, where he claimed to have killed more than three thousand rebels.[24] But the

attack did not stop the Xiangyang force from heading to the Han River. Cutting through southern Shaanxi, the Han River stood as a natural barrier on rebels' way to Sichuan. However, its upper sections from Mianxian to Ziyang were shallow, especially in winter and spring. To prevent the insurgents from crossing the river, the Shaanxi authorities ordered that all boats be moored at the south shore and placed Ke Fan, who had brought his 1,500 troops back from Sichuan in the fourth month, and other officers to guard and patrol the river.[25] Meanwhile, 2,000 Salar Muslim soldiers were deployed from Gansu's Xunhua, and 1,000 native soldiers from Gansu's Zhuanglang.[26] Perhaps having no confidence in his forces' ability to annihilate the insurgents north of the river, Qianlong instructed his commanders that, if they failed to round them all up on the north bank, it would be desirable to pressure them to northern Sichuan to merge with the insurgents there so that the Qing forces could tackle both groups in one spot. His rationale was that this would save the undisturbed areas in Shaanxi from being rampaged.[27] This directive was tantamount to acquiescence to allowing the rebels to cross the Han River.

Through mountainous paths, the rebels marched to Xunyang and then to the north bank of Ankang, the seat of Xing'an prefecture, arriving on 02/05/05. Although the city was guarded by only five hundred troops, rising water in the Han River that night saved it. From there the rebels split into two divisions. The first division of about twenty thousand people moved westward, pretending to make a crossing at Xixiang but then turning southward to Baimashi in Ziyang, the southernmost point of the Han River in Shaanxi, where the water was only 3 to 4 feet deep. While Huiling, Qingcheng, and Shuliang were moving slowly westward to Xixiang, in the week between 02/05/12 and 02/05/19, the insurgents and their horses waded across the river at Baimashi (White Horse Rock) and nearby Nianyutan (Catfish Shore) and seized some boats to ferry their women, children, and the elderly across. The Qing forces did not arrive at Baimashi until the last day of the crossing; they were only able to attack the last batch of several hundred rebels crossing the river. The second division of five thousand led by Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger moved northwestward along the river. Not deterred by the Qing force guarding the river en route, it reached Ziyang's Hanwangcheng on 02/05/19. The rebels forded the river and used a few boats for their families. In both crossings, the rebels paid local ferrymen with silver bullion or clothes. They also left a ditty in the Han River valley: "Work less in your fields but make more shoes; if we do not return in the seventh month, look for us in the eighth month" (*Shaozuozhuangjia duozuoxie, qiyuebulai bayuelai*).[28] As the conflict unfolded in the years to come, the Han River valley in southern Shaanxi was frequented by

various rebel groups—the insurgents did return, and many times.

Despite his earlier suggestion to push the rebels into northern Sichuan, Qianlong was shocked and infuriated on learning that it was now a reality, particularly fuming at the fact that his troops did not get to Baimashi until one week late. Outpouring his anger at Huiling and his generals in two harshly worded edicts, he dismissed Huiling as the campaign's commander-in-chief in addition to depriving him of his hereditary rank and feather trappings. Reluctantly, Qianlong appointed Yimian to take Huiling's place. Hengšui, Ke Fan, Qingcheng, and Shuliang were deprived of their feather trappings or their *baturu* titles, and some were demoted in rank. Qianlong even threatened to use capital punishment if they continued with their way of conducting the campaign. Yet he had to allow them to stay in their positions owing to the shortage of able commanders.[29] For the second time, Qianlong reshuffled the campaign's top leadership only five months after Huiling became commander-in-chief.

LEBAO AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

As the expanded Xiangyang force was heading to Sichuan, their brethren there were not in good shape. Having suffered several deadly defeats at Mingliang's and Delengtai's hands, the remaining two thousand Dazhou rebels were forced to the mountains astride Dazhou, Dongxiang, and Xinning. In Daning, after a new uprising in the early spring, Chen Chongde, a local sectarian leader, led his thousand followers and fortified themselves at Jiulongchi but soon moved to Laomuyuan, a more perilous spot, after Guancheng and six hundred troops were sent there to reinforce the local forces.[30] Together with Ran Wenchou's Blue Band and Luo Qiqing's White Band at Bazhou's Fangshanping, the insurgents in Sichuan probably did not exceed six thousand in total.

After having crossed the Han River, the first Xiangyang division went westward to Xixiang, since the roads to Sichuan through the Daba Mountains had been dug up by the local authorities. It then split into two groups. One group entered Sichuan at Tongjiang's Zhuyuguan and joined the Blue and White Bands at Fangshanping. The other group headed to Taiping. At the same time, the second division led by Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger entered Taiping at Chengkou.[31] The Qing generals again failed to catch up with the rebels, which prompted Qianlong to execrate them as "extremely shameless."[32] In Sichuan, Yimian scrambled to intercept the Xiangyang rebels in Taiping but to no avail.[33] They soon advanced to Kaixian's Qianhe. Then the group that stopped at Fangshanping also went to Kaixian. In the late sixth month, the newly arrived insurgents inundated Kaixian, their camps

extending for miles; many local residents were pulled into their ranks. The total number of the rebels of both Hubei and Sichuan might have been nearly thirty thousand.[34]

Contrary to what the Xiangyang leaders had envisaged, however, the Dazhou rebels under Xu Tiande and Wang Sanhuai did not embrace them warmly. Through their messengers, a meeting of the leaders of Xiangyang and Dazhou was arranged at Dongxiang's Zhonghe, but it was informal and brief—both sides were on horseback.[35] When the Xiangyang leaders expressed their desire to merge, their Sichuan counterparts turned them down. Apparently, a turf war set in; the natives were resentful of outsiders coming to their home region with pretensions of superiority. As Wang Sanhuai put it, "It does not make sense to allow the people from Hubei to tread our Sichuan territories."[36] It is likely that the Xiangyang group left Luo Qiqing and Ran Wenchou's Fangshanping stronghold for similar reasons. Not long after the Xiangyang insurgents arrived, the Qing side detected that they intended to return to Hubei. Besides the turf war factor, the Xiangyang insurgents were disappointed with the meager region, which was no comparison to the affluent country and bustling towns in Xiangyang.[37] In addition, the pressure from the Qing forces probably also had a bearing. Having followed the Xiangyang force to Sichuan, the Qing armies from Hubei united with their counterparts in Sichuan, which positioned them to finish off both rebel cohorts in one place, according to Qianlong's design. Yimian, the new commander-in-chief, decided to loosely encircle all the rebels in the northeastern corner of Sichuan because "it is best for the imperial troops to fight together, whereas it is to the advantage of the bandits to divide themselves but to their disadvantage to stay together."[38]

The Xiangyang force set out for Hubei in the intercalary month (after the sixth month). It took a different route, first going south to the north bank of the Yangzi River and then marching along the river to Hubei. Xu Tiande, Wang Sanhuai, and other Sichuan chiefs led their forces and accompanied the Hubei force to Fengjie. On their way, they touched off new uprisings in Kaixian, Yunyang, Wanxian, and Fengjie, all in Kuizhou prefecture, another sectarian hotbed in eastern Sichuan but largely peaceful until this time. Some of the uprisings attracted thousands of followers. At one point, the rebels attacked the seat of Yunyang county but were unsuccessful. South of the Yangzi River, only one uprising was held at Fengjie's Tiewasi. Led by the two brothers Gong Wenyu and Gong Qiwei, the rebels were crushed later in the year by local troops aided by militiamen from both Fengjie and two counties of Hubei, Lichuan and Enshi.[39] The lone rebel stronghold that survived 1797 was at Kaixian's Baiyanshan and was led by Lin Lianggong, a sectarian of Yunyang. Under Shuliang and Mukedeng'a,

the Qing siege by six thousand troops against this stronghold turned out to be a protracted one.[40]

In Fengjie, Xu Tiande and Wang Sanhuai led the Sichuan rebels and turned north to Daning. The Xiangyang force split up and took two routes. Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger led their main force and proceeded to Hubei. But Wang Tingzhao, Li Shu, Fan Renjie, Zhang Hanchao, Wang Guangzu, and an unknown number of rebels of Hubei and Shaanxi stayed in Sichuan and then went to Daning with the Xu-Wang force. The scheme might have called for leaving a portion of their force in Sichuan to check the Qing armies from trailing the Yao-Wang regiment. Indeed, only Mingliang and Delengtai pursued the Yao-Wang group to Hubei, but Huiling, Hengšui, Shuliang, and others stayed in Sichuan.

Although the Xiangyang insurgents failed to merge with the rebels in Sichuan, their coming to Sichuan had long-lasting repercussions as they passed on guerrilla tactics to their Sichuan counterparts. Consequently, the Sichuan rebels abandoned their mountaintop tactics and moved out of the perimeter of their home region. The dynamics of the White Lotus War thus permanently changed. In Daning, the Xu-Wang force and those Xiangyang rebels who had stayed in Sichuan planned to join forces with the rebels holing up at Laomuyuan and recruit more followers, as they had heard that more uprisings had been planned in Daning. However, the plan was spoiled by Qing forces besieging the Laomuyuan stronghold, led by Guancheng and Liu Junfu, the provincial military commander of Huguang.[41] After failing to link up with the rebels at Laomuyuan, the coalesced rebels attacked the seat of Taiping subprefecture but had no success.[42] They thus moved westward to Bazhou, intending to meet the conjoined Blue and White Bands at Fangshanping.

By this time, the sluggish siege at Fangshanping led by Besiyang had lasted for months. To step up the siege, Yimian first sent Zhu Shedou there in the late summer and then went there himself in the eighth month. Typical of his penchant, Yimian used a large number of civil officials to lead militiamen, who joined the regular troops in an all-out assault. Following several days of intensive fighting, they captured the mountaintop on 02/08/21 after setting the main rebel forts ablaze with grenades.[43] Although Yimian claimed that thousands of rebels had been killed, both Luo Qiqing and Ran Wenchou survived and led their remnants toward the city of Bazhou, where they met with Xu Tiande, Wang Sanhuai, Li Shu, and others.

On 02/09/10, insurgents of multiple groups, perhaps totaling twenty thousand, captured Bazhou.[44] Then, in the tenth month, they also seized the city of Tongjiang, which had no walls, despite fanatic efforts by the local authorities to hold the city.[45] Nevertheless, the

captors did not attempt to keep either town. They soon pulled out and turned to assailing Qing supply arteries. Apparently, the insurgents were plagued with a shortage of supplies. About this time, Li Shu left Sichuan and went to Shaanxi, likely because of difficulties acquiring supplies. As the Qing records reveal, the insurgents intended to cross the Han River and move to more hospitable places in Shaanxi or Hubei. As Li Shu led a sizable army, Huiling, Hengšui, and Qingcheng trailed him to Shaanxi.[46] Meanwhile, the vanguard of the Yao-Wang force had penetrated southern Shaanxi via the northwestern tip of Hubei. The Han River valley was once again on high alert.

Back in northern Sichuan, the Qing side spared no effort to safeguard its artery connecting Sichuan with Beijing via Xi'an, as all war funds in silver ingots from Beijing were transported via this long and arduous route. Starting from Chengdu, the highway went to Guangyuan, Sichuan's northern gateway. After it entered Shaanxi, starting from Baocheng, the highway was a narrow plank trail chiseled in cliffs, the so-called *zhandao*, which spanned 150 miles ending in Shaanxi's Meixian. Then the road continued along the northern foot of the Qinling Mountains to Xi'an. Throughout most of the White Lotus War, this vital artery was a focal point for both sides. To prevent the rebels from approaching the plank trail, in late 1797, Qianlong first sent Hengšui and Qingcheng to Hanzhong but shortly after ordered them to Guangyuan. In Sichuan, first Boohing, a regional military commander in Shaanxi, and then Ingšan was sent to secure the seat of Baoning prefecture. On his arrival, Ingšan recruited one thousand militiamen to guard strategic points between Baoning and Guangyuan.[47] (Map 2.2.)



MAP 2.2. Sites of Major Battles in Northeastern Sichuan in Late 1797.

With the defense of the Sichuan-Xi'an artery strengthened, the insurgents turned instead to the route between Chengdu and Dazhou. They operated in groups of several thousand people each and targeted, in the tenth and eleventh months, the county seats of Yingshan, Yilong, Guang'an, and Linshui, all in Shunqing prefecture and along or near the route. The fighting was fierce, sometimes lasting for days, and a few Qing officers were killed.[48] Although the insurgents had no luck in capturing any of the cities, the pressure on the Qing forces in Sichuan had been mounting after the departure first of Mingliang and Delengtai and then of Hengšui and Qingcheng. Without being effectively checked, the rebel groups caused havoc among the unarmed local residents, driving many to flee or, especially for women, commit suicide. As a chronologist of the war describes it,

“The bandits were everywhere; troops and militiamen were exhausted by hunting the bandits in every direction. Nobody knew the names of all those bandit chiefs; the officials and civilians who died in the devastation were numberless.”[49]

Having been effective in crushing the rebels’ mountaintop strongholds, Yimian was ill fitted to battle against their guerrilla warfare.[50] Complaining about the insufficiency of his forces, he deployed more troops to Sichuan from Gansu and Shandong.[51] In addition, he endorsed hiring more militiamen, making the last quarter of 1797 the peak of militia expansion in Sichuan. Making a bleak situation more grim, the Xiangyang force led by Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger had penetrated northern Sichuan from Shaanxi. Meanwhile, the remnants of the Changyang rebels, after having abandoned another mountaintop, tried to make inroads into Sichuan. Hard pressed, Yimian asked the throne, in the tenth month, to send another viceroy to Sichuan to take charge of local affairs so that he could concentrate on military operations.[52]

Qianlong had just voiced his distrust of Yimian in the ninth month: “It looks like none of those forces [in Sichuan] led by Yimian and others is reliable.”[53] Never having had full confidence in Yimian, he took this request as his resignation. On 02/10/26, he cashiered Yimian and appointed Lebao as commander-in-chief because Yimian was “aged,” but he retained Yimian in Sichuan to lead the logistical services.[54] For the third time within a year, Qianlong reshuffled the campaign’s commandership; Lebao became the fourth commander-in-chief after Yongbao, Huiling, and Yimian. Unlike his predecessors, Lebao would remain the mastermind of the war leadership until its conclusion, although there were some ups and downs ahead for Lebao.

In terms of his career, Lebao had been faring better than Yongbao, although the latter had inherited their father’s hereditary rank. Entering officialdom at the age of sixteen after acquiring the title of *jiansheng*, likely through purchase, Lebao had moved between civil and military positions and served both in the capital, including more than once in the Ministry of War, and on frontiers such as Guihua and Küriye. He had served as governor and governor-general several times. However, Lebao had not participated in any war until the second Gurkha war in 1791–1792, when he participated in logistical tasks, which provided him with first-hand experience in the maneuvering of war funds to benefit commanders and logistical officials. In 1794, Lebao, as governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, executed Liu Song during the sectarian persecution.[55]

In the early summer of 1795, Lebao was named governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou.[56] In this capacity, he took charge of the logistics of the suppression campaign against the Miao rebellion. Teaming up

with Fuk'anggan and Helin, the two chief commanders of the campaign who were notorious for splurging and misappropriating war funds, Lebao did not leave a clean record. Rumors circulated about Lebao's misappropriating war funds to make personal connections, including sending gifts to curry favor with Hešen.[57] In the spring of 1797, Qianlong decided to transfer Lebao to Sichuan. Before he set out for Sichuan, a new order arrived that changed his destination to Huangbaishan in Hubei. Just days after Lebao arrived there in the mid-first month, however, Qianlong ordered him to rush back to Guizhou because another uprising by the Zhongjia Miao people had just erupted in Nanlong, at the southwestern tip of Guizhou. Led by Wang Nangxian, a Miao woman who was believed to know magic, the uprising attracted a sizable crowd and was starting to spread. Chiefly depending on Shi Jin, an able officer from Shaanxi, Lebao put down this uprising within several months, which won him the noble rank of marquis of the first grade as well as the reputation for being an effective general. In the ninth month of 1797, after the Yao-Wang force returned to Hubei, Lebao was appointed governor-general of Huguang. In an edict issued shortly after, it was made clear that Lebao was to be given the title of chief commander of the Hubei theater.[58] Before Lebao set out for his new position, however, Qianlong redirected him to Sichuan and named him commander-in-chief of the entire campaign.

It is worth asking why Qianlong valued Lebao so greatly, given his scanty war experience and his brother Yongbao's dismissal and trial not even a year earlier (though a ranking official's guilt and dishonor seldom affected his siblings' careers in Qing times). Qianlong's selection of Lebao underscores a problem that the Qing state faced during the Qianlong–Jiaqing transition, the dearth of experienced military leaders. As Song Shu mentioned in his remonstration, the key to the timely success of the suppression campaign was correct leadership. Although Qianlong concurred with Song and admitted that neither Yongbao nor Huiling was fit for the position of commander-in-chief, he confessed that there were not many qualified people available to take on the commanding duty, as many veteran generals had recently passed away—Fuk'anggan, Hailanca, and Sun Shiyi—and some others, such as Agūi, were advanced in age.[59] "Indeed there is nobody who can be relied on," Qianlong lamented.

From early in the Qing dynasty when the empire was expanding and waging frontier wars, some conventions took shape in the selection of chief commander for a war. At first, top notch Manchu military aristocrats were high on the list.[60] Starting from the Yongzheng period and throughout the Qianlong period, a leading grand councilor was often appointed as special commissioner to

supervise a war.[61] More often than not, it was a governor-general, either Manchu or Chinese, who was appointed as commander-in-chief.[62] Until the end of the eighteenth century it had never occurred to any emperor of the Qing that it was difficult to locate a qualified commander-in-chief. Nevertheless, times were different at the start of the Jiaqing era. The passing of many generals of the expansion era left a visible gap in the top echelon of the Qing military. Meanwhile, Qianlong had championed a new rationale that suppression campaigns against internal revolts should not involve the elite banner divisions but provincial Green Standard garrison troops would suffice. In addition, the commander-in-chief should not be one with the status to command a frontier war against enemies from without. When the Jiaqing emperor was questioned later on why neither Qianlong nor he had sent an imperial prince to lead the White Lotus War, Jiaqing explained that it was not appropriate to send a prince to lead a war in "peacetime," because it was hard to punish him if he did not accomplish the job.[63] In fact, none of the imperial princes at the time was battle-tested. Meanwhile, most grand councilors, being quintessential Chinese literati, were not conversant with military affairs.

The only option left was to select the commander-in-chief from among the seven incumbent governors-general. However, three of them (Liang Kentang, the Zhili governor-general; Li Fenghan, that of Liang Jiang; and Jiqing, of Guangdong and Guangxi) did not have substantial military background or experience, and two others, Yimian and Ohūi (who was appointed governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou at the end of 1797), were already involved in the war and had proved not fit for the chief commandership. The only choice was between Kuilun and Lebao.[64] Of the two, Lebao was better connected with the court, more particularly Hešen himself, as Lebao had been more than adequately skillful in making connections and fostering protégés in his long career.[65] A completely different personality, Kuilun, the governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang, had earned a reputation as a corruption fighter in the last year of the Qianlong reign, as will be discussed in the next chapter. Nevertheless, he might not have been attentive enough to his relationship with Hešen, given his self-righteous and straightforward disposition.

In fact, one high-caliber general of the expansion generation was still alive and vigorous. Mingliang would have been far more qualified than Lebao and others to lead the campaign. However, Mingliang's association with Agūi, Hešen's major rival, had doomed him. As we have seen, Mingliang had frequently been found to be at fault despite his indisputable contributions to both the Miao and the White Lotus campaigns. In the eighth month of 1797, Agūi passed away at the age

of eighty.[66] Shortly before his death, one of the last matters that Agūi had dealt with was a request by Lebao to pay stipends to the militia leaders in Guizhou's Miao area who had been retained in service after the end of the Miao campaign. Agūi had rejected the request because Lebao did not clearly state how many leaders were involved in his request, which was potentially an excuse for misappropriation of funds.[67] Agūi's death left no obstacle for Hešen to place his own protégés in key positions. Given that the void left by Agūi needed to be filled, preferably with somebody who had military credentials, success in the White Lotus War would pave the way for the commander-in-chief to ascend to the Grand Council. Understandably, it would not be in Hešen's best interest to open the door for Mingliang. All in all, Lebao was a natural choice to lead the campaign for both Qianlong and Hešen.

Nevertheless, Lebao moved extremely slowly from Guizhou to the frontline; after his appointment, three months would elapse before he reached the front. During his measured journey, Lebao managed to deter two royal orders that changed his destination to southern Shaanxi to cooperate with Mingliang in fighting against the Xiangyang rebels. Given Mingliang's rivalry with Yongbao and Lebao's own rough relationship with him in the Miao campaign, Lebao went to extra lengths to avoid going to Shaanxi. The first order came shortly after Lebao's appointment as commander-in-chief, when the Xiangyang insurgents had assembled in the Hanzhong area, attempting to cross the Han River to the north.[68] Without openly voicing his displeasure, Lebao employed delay tactics; when he reached Luzhou in southern Sichuan, he paused. On 02/11/24, Xu Tiande and Wang Sanhuai took the seat of Changshou county, which had no walls and was only defended by militiamen (its magistrate was fighting the rebels elsewhere). Because of Changshou's proximity to Chongqing, Yimian immediately sent Besiyang and one thousand troops to reinforce Chongqing's defenses.[69] On learning this news, Lebao immediately requested to be sent to Changshou instead of Shaanxi; the request was approved by Qianlong.[70]

But Lebao did not rush to Changshou. Citing the excuse that he had not brought any troops with him, he stayed in Luzhou to recruit militias and wait for three hundred garrison troops summoned from the nearby Yongning command, or so he claimed. Furthermore, he complained about the insufficiency of the military force in Sichuan and demanded reinforcements.[71] In fact, he had brought with him three thousand militiamen from Tongren, Guizhou, which he did not tell the throne about until late in 1800.[72] While idling in Luzhou, Lebao penned a memorial to accentuate the necessity of sending more troops to Sichuan. First analyzing the reasons that the campaign had

not been brought to its end by pointing to the rebels' guerrilla tactics and their scheme of kidnaping local folks to expand their numbers, Lebao painted a pessimistic picture of the suppression campaign:

> Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Hubei are three provinces that jigsaw each other; [their borders] are outlying for thousands of *li*, and high mountains and steep hills are everywhere, providing the bandits with perilous spots at which to hole up and numerous paths to escape. When the imperial troops hold passes and try to intercept them, the bandits turn to harass the places that are not guarded. Therefore, there are no troops in the places where the bandits are, whereas there are no bandits in the place where the troops are. There are also cases in which the bandits passed but the troops had not arrived or the troops arrived only after the bandits had just left. When the troops assail them in the east, they flee to the west; when the troops hit them in the north, they run to the south. When it comes to exterminating the bandits, even dozens of branches of armies cannot encircle them. When it comes to intercepting them, even hundreds of thousands of troops are not enough to guard everywhere.[73]

Lebao was not the first to shed light on the rebels' guerrilla tactics. Both Yimian and Mingliang had discussed them months before. Lebao, however, was the first to emphasize the topographic factors. The rhetoric that Lebao used in this memorial was to be echoed repeatedly in the long campaign by commanders defending their fruitless operations. It has also been accepted by some historians when explaining the protraction of the war. Nevertheless, by late 1797, the campaign's main battlefields had not moved to the immense and wild Daba Mountains or the Qinling Mountains. Only adopting guerrilla tactics recently, the Sichuan rebels had mainly targeted towns along the logistical routes in Shunqing prefecture and Dazhou subprefecture. By stressing the difficult topography in the three battleground provinces and claiming that even hundreds of thousands of troops would not be enough to round up the rebels, Lebao tried, preemptively, to justify a long and costly campaign.

For the moment, Lebao kept pushing for more reinforcements. He complained that the military forces in Sichuan were small but had been fighting against numerous insurgents, whereas Mingliang and Delengtai led massive forces but fought only a smaller group of insurgents in Shaanxi. Therefore, he suggested that the Qing troops in Shaanxi shepherd the rebels to Sichuan and that the Qing troops in Sichuan seduce the scattered rebels to merge into one group that could be eliminated all at once. To achieve this, however, Lebao requested that all the Qing forces be sent to Sichuan under his command; he said that he would not take any action until the troops he requested arrived.[74] Despite Lebao's self-serving tone, Qianlong, who seemed to regard Lebao as his savior at this moment, praised him for his pointed exposé of the common problems in the campaign and

expressed his high expectations of him: “Since Lebao is so conversant [with all the problems] and discusses them so thoroughly, he will surely relinquish all those entrenched habits and make a great difference.”[75]

During the long wait for Lebao to arrive at the front, the Qing forces in Sichuan continued to resist the rebels’ attacks along the logistical routes in Shunqing and Dazhou. While almost all the towns were guarded only by hired militiamen (except for the county seat of Liangshan, where Minghing led the defense), the Qing regular forces led by Zhu Shedou and Boohing shuttled from one spot to another to repel the attackers. Luo Qiqing and Ran Wenchou besieged the seat of Yingshan county for two weeks but had to give up their campaign when Hengšui and Qingcheng arrived and a tense fight ensued.[76] At the beginning of the twelfth month, Xu Tiande and Wang Sanhuai abandoned the city of Changshou one week after they took it and turned north to attack the seats of Liangshan, Xinning, and finally Dazhou, but the arrival of Huiling, Fucheng, and others from southern Shaanxi foiled their attempt to take Dazhou.[77]

Having scored no success in taking those towns, Xu and Wang turned toward Linjiangshi (meaning “market by the river”), a bustling commercial town in Kaixian. They coordinated with the Xiangyang groups who had stayed in Sichuan and together captured Linjiangshi a few days before the New Year of 1798 (February 16), because only several hundred militiamen had been assembled to guard it. With hundreds of shops and businesses in the town, the rebels had a joyful New Year celebration, holding banquets and staging operas.[78] At that time, the ten thousand insurgents who had holed up at Kaixian’s Baiyanshan for months abandoned their stronghold. After having attacked but failed to take the seat of Kaixian, they joined their counterparts in Linjiangshi on 03/01/10.[79] The Qing forces’ inaction during the New Year celebration allowed the insurgents to stay in Linjiangshi for more than half a month; they did not leave the town until 03/01/15, the day of the Lantern Festival, which often marked the end of the festivities.[80]

At the time Linjiangshi fell, Lebao was still far away from the frontline. Despite his promise of engaging the rebels in Changshou, Lebao went to Chongqing instead and stayed in this commercial hub for some time. He might have enjoyed opera there, his favored entertainment, or he might have recruited an opera troupe to take with him. When Lebao eventually arrived in Changshou, the city had been free of the rebels for weeks. Thus, he changed his task from expelling the rebels to “conciliating” the residents. Again, he used the excuse of waiting for more troops to justify his lingering in Changshou. According to him, the two thousand new soldiers he

recruited in southern Sichuan were not experienced, so he had deployed more troops and had to await their arrival.[81] Not until a few days before the New Year, when one thousand troops from Guizhou and two thousand new soldiers from Chengdu arrived, did Lebao leave Changshou and continue north. Nevertheless, when one detachment of the Xiangyang force crossed the Han River to the north, Qianlong became alarmed, thinking that the main Xiangyang force led by Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger could cross the river at any time. On 03/01/08, on the heels of several harshly worded edicts chastising Mingliang, he directed Lebao to rush to Shaanxi to command the operations there and report on the mismanagement by Mingliang and others.[82]

Yet Qianlong changed his mind in only ten days. As previously, Lebao would do anything to avoid going to Shaanxi to cooperate with Mingliang. He kept reporting alarming news in Sichuan to the emperor. Meanwhile, Eldemboo and Funing, who were still in Hubei, also reported on the precarious situation in Sichuan, as they had received letters from Yimian and Mukedeng'a, urging them to Sichuan. On receiving the memorial from Eldemboo and Funing on 03/01/18, Qianlong ordered Lebao to stay in Sichuan.[83] On the following day, he appointed Lebao governor-general of Sichuan and sent Yimian back to his original post as governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu. He also ordered both Funing and Ingšan to lead the logistics in Sichuan.[84] Apparently another compromise to Lebao, this new appointment might also have been meant to spur Lebao to move faster. Meanwhile, Qianlong no longer directed Lebao to go to Shaanxi.

Although this was a rare opportunity for the Qing forces to encircle almost all the rebel groups in Sichuan together in Linjiangshi, Lebao did not seem inclined to act in that direction. When the rebel forces deserted Linjiangshi two weeks after the New Year, Lebao was still in Dianjiang, from which he kept moving north at snail's pace. Not until 02/02/09 did he formally take his position as Sichuan's governor-general by receiving the seal from Ingšan.[85] This was more than three months after Lebao's appointment as the campaign's commander-in-chief. Even Qianlong, who had lodged great hope in Lebao, expressed his displeasure about the latter's movements, calling them too "unhurried."[86] It would soon become clear that Lebao was a master of delay tactics, willing to do whatever possible to slow operations if that served his purposes. On his arrival at the front, he tried not to confront the major rebel forces that had just left Linjiangshi. Instead, he chose to deal with a smaller and newly assembled rebel group in Wanxian, which gave him an easy victory and won Qianlong's loud applause. Qianlong went so far as to say that "once Lebao reached

Sichuan the situation turned in an extremely promising direction."[87]

A skilled networker as well, Lebao knew with whom he should make friends and to whom he should show a stern face. On his arrival, Lebao first sent Yimian, Mingliang's ally, back to Shaanxi, though he could have found an excuse to keep him in Sichuan, because he retained Huiling and Ingšan, the latter continuing to take charge of logistics in Dazhou.[88] Meanwhile, Lebao acted on Qianlong's repeated instructions to severely penalize generals who had not fought wholeheartedly.[89] He took his first disciplinary action against Shuliang and Mukedeng'a. Accusing the two of laxity in their six-month-long siege at Baiyanshan and of failure to stop the insurgents there from going to Linjiangshi, he requested that both be dismissed and sent to Beijing for trial, which won Qianlong's praise for his forceful disciplinary action.[90]

Throughout the spring, the Sichuan insurgents continued their guerrilla war in Shunqing and Dazhou. They acted in groups but cooperated with each other on occasions. Lebao failed to crush any of them. In the second month, Boohing was killed in Dazhou.[91] Once again Lebao complained that his force of seven thousand strong was too small to cope with all the insurgent bands and requested ten thousand Green Standard troops from Yunnan and Guizhou (five thousand from each province). With Qianlong's approval, the ten thousand reinforcements arrived in the late spring, in the largest deployment from outside of the battlefield provinces.[92] As summer replaced spring, Qianlong's unreserved trust in Lebao began to evaporate. He first criticized Lebao for not being able to catch rebel chiefs and showing no concern about the campaign's slow progress, but only sending the throne periodic dull briefs on operations or names of officials he recommended for promotions.[93] Shortly after, Qianlong blamed him for having allowed generals under him, such as Hengšui and Qingcheng, to repel the rebels to Shaanxi without trying to finish them off in Sichuan, saying he was "using his neighbor's field as a drain" (*yilinweihe*).[94] Ultimately, Qianlong began to doubt Lebao's competency: "Lebao won victories when he first arrived in Sichuan, making a great reputation for himself. Why has he not been as good as before lately?"[95] As time elapsed, his doubts would be transformed into despair and wrath.

THE DEMISE OF THE HUBEI REBELLION

In the spring of 1797, after the Xiangyang force left Hubei for Henan, normality returned to northern Hubei, by and large. In Xiangyang and Yunyang prefectures, aided by the relief work of the local authorities, residents returned and production resumed, although the authorities'

hunt for returned rebels was still under way.[96] From then through the summer, only the Changyang rebel group led by Lin Zhihua and Tan Jiayao was still at large in the province's southwestern corner. However, the return of Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger in the early autumn again threw parts of northwestern Hubei into a shambles. It was not until early 1798 that the last remnants of the Lin-Tan rebel force were cleared. Two months later, the Yao-Wang force also met its demise on the Shaanxi-Hubei border. Nevertheless, to the Qianlong emperor, both victories came too late, achieved only after numerous imperial censures and demotions of the major generals fighting against the two groups.

The End of the Changyang Uprising

After the Lin-Tan force broke from the heavy siege at Bayeshan in the sixth month, 1797, they had first moved along Hubei's western borders, attempting to join their counterparts in Sichuan but failing to do so. Then they returned to Changle and fortified themselves on a mountaintop at Baiyuzhai. In the early autumn, Funing and Eldemboo, who had pursued them from Bayeshan, captured the mountaintop. The surviving insurgents moved to nearby Maozishan and holed up again atop a mountain.[97] The siege followed the usual pattern; the seven to eight thousand Qing troops were repeatedly repelled by the rebels, who were only half of their enemy's number and had little more than rocks and rolling logs. Funing and Eldemboo did not step up their attacks until the Yao-Wang force returned to Hubei, for they feared that the latter might link up with the insurgents at Maozishan. However, after the Yao-Wang force moved northward, as will be narrated below, they slowed down again. Qianlong repeatedly and severely reprimanded the two chief commanders for their tepid operations, but his criticism failed to have any effect. In the late eighth month, when supplies were running out, the insurgents made another inexplicable breakout, although the report to Qianlong stated that the Qing forces had destroyed their forts and killed many. Ridiculing the two commanders for having merely taken empty forts after the insurgents had evacuated, Qianlong did not grant any rewards except for troops killed in the battle.[98]

In the late autumn, the Lin-Tan group made an inroad into Sichuan's Wushan. Unable to move farther, they returned to Hubei and drifted between Jianshi, Enshi, and Lichuan while warding off the Qing forces chasing them. Shortly after his wife and daughter were captured by the Qing forces, Lin Zhihua was killed in a battle.[99] Led by Tan Jiayao, the last few hundred insurgents returned to their home regions of Changyang and Changle. For weeks they holed up on a mountaintop at Zhulizhai. Following days of fighting, the Qing forces

set their forts ablaze, but Tan and about two hundred rebels escaped.[100] Again fleeing to the border with Sichuan, they wandered in Jianshi, Badong, and Guizhou. Funing and Eldemboo were on their heels but did not catch them. In the mid-first month, 1798, when Wang Xin went to Badong to coordinate logistics for the troops in eastern Sichuan, he encountered Tan and his last men in Guizhou. After a skirmish with Wang, Tan led a small group of the insurgents up to a mountaintop at Zhongbaozhai, which meant "final retribution fort." Only then did Funing and Eldemboo arrive.[101]

During this protracted battle against the Lin-Tan force, Qianlong had harshly criticized Funing and Eldemboo countless times, calling them "shameless" and "heartless" and threatening them with severe punishments. Wang Xin's report on their slow moves enraged him once more. He demoted both Funing and Eldemboo in their official and noble ranks.[102] Having been ordered to head to Sichuan (two thousand soldiers under him had already been sent there), Funing took another thousand troops and left for Sichuan in mid-first month.[103] Immediately after Funing's departure, on 03/01/17, Eldemboo sent three dispatches to climb up the cliffs with ladders and ropes. On reaching the mountaintop, the troops killed or captured all the rebels at the Zhongbaozhai stronghold. Tan Jiayao and Zhang Zhengchao, another key leader of this uprising, were caught. Zhang Xunlong, the sectarian teacher and likely mastermind of the uprising, had been killed earlier.[104]

Qianlong was not pleased at all. It took nearly two years for his armies to finish off the Changyang insurgents, who had never been able to attack any city or town but managed to move from one mountaintop to another, taking advantage of their suppressors' lackadaisical effort. In place of praise and rewards, Qianlong demoted both Funing and Eldemboo to banner vice commanders-in-chief, and he obliged Eldemboo to surrender to his own banner 10,000 taels of silver that he had previously received as awards and Funing to pay a fine of 40,000 taels to the logistical funds in Sichuan. Aware that Funing was more responsible than Eldemboo, Qianlong ordered Eldemboo to join the campaign in Sichuan but reassigned Funing to take charge of logistics in Sichuan instead of commanding the fighting.[105] In later chitchat on the campaign by officials and functionaries in the capital, Funing's reassignment was mentioned as a typical example of how commanders were excused for procrastination and dereliction. Not an aristocrat himself, Eldemboo might have been unable to put sincere effort into the fighting when Funing was present, as Funing was from a family of higher status and had been Hubei's governor-general. Eldemboo's crisp victory at Zhongbaozhai was more characteristic of his fighting style when he was determined to finish

off his enemy.

The Demise of the Yao-Wang Force

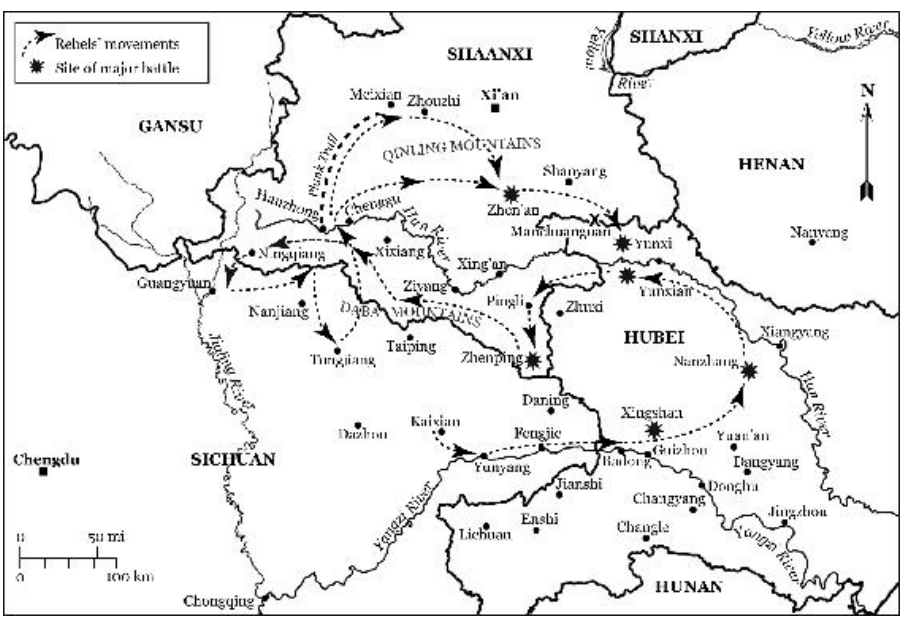
After entering Hubei at Badong in the early seventh month, 1797, Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger had planned to link up with the Changyang rebels, but the Changyang rebels had returned to Changle and were under siege at Maozishan. Thus, the Yao-Wang force turned north, aiming to return to Xiangyang. When the rebels approached the seat of Guizhou county, they successfully deceived Mingliang and Delengtai, who had arrived there before them sailing down the Yangzi River, by leaving behind a small dispatch to check the Qing forces while their main force marched quickly northward and took Xingshan city (sans walls). Then they continued to march to Nanzhang while sending a detachment eastward to Yuan'an and Dangyang.

At this point, the Yao-Wang force consisted of as many as twenty thousand people and had seized six to seven thousand horses from local residents and their enemies, whereas the Qing force fighting it was spread thin by leaving troops to guard strategic points and cities. Mingliang complained that he had only four thousand combat men with him and six to seven hundred horses.[106] On 02/07/02, Qianlong endorsed the deployment of one thousand bannermen from Jilin and two thousand bannermen from Heilongjiang and ordered eight thousand horses made ready for duty from the state stables to equip those bannermen.[107] To secure Xiangyang's defense, Qianlong sent two thousand Green Standard troops there from Shanxi and ordered one hundred strong elite banner troops from Muran, the imperial summer resort, led by the two Manchu generals Huilun and Ahabao to hurry to Xiangyang. Meanwhile, Jing'an also sent one thousand Henan troops to Hubei's Nanzhang.[108] Altogether, about six thousand troops were deployed to Hubei, which was the second major mobilization in this campaign. (Map 2.3.)

At the beginning of the eighth month, the Yao-Wang force reached the vicinity of Xiangyang (their regiment in the Yuan'an-Dangyang area had been forced to go north as well by Delengtai and Mingliang). Joined by five hundred newly arrived Jilin bannermen led by Huilun and Ahabao, who had dashed out of the city,[109] Delengtai and Mingliang inflicted heavy casualties on the insurgents. With their plan of returning Xiangyang doomed and their numbers shrunk, the rebels turned westward to the Wudang Mountains and then moved toward the Han River, attempting to cross the river to Henan. Their plan was to recruit more followers on Henan's mountainous western borders. But they could not make to the river after being attacked by Mingliang and Delengtai and suffering more casualties.[110]

On 02/08/29, in a ferocious battle at Yunxian's Caodian, in which

many on both sides were on horseback, the Qing forces allegedly killed more than one thousand and captured over three hundred people (nearly two-thirds were women), while hundreds more jumped off the cliffs. Following the battle, Ahabao and others pursued the retreating insurgents to Chenjiashan, where another brutal and close battle ensued. In the melee, Huilun was killed when he took on a rebel chief, which drew to him a throng of rebels jabbing him with spears; killed also were several other ranking Manchu officers. Ahabao was rescued by his subordinates when his horse was wounded, but those rescuers lost their own lives.[111] Two weeks before this battle, Fengshen'a, a ranking Mongol bannerman, had been killed in a battle.[112] But Huilun was the highest-ranking Manchu officer to die in the war. From the same eminent Fuca family as Mingliang (who was Huilun's uncle), Huilun had inherited the highest noble rank, duke of the first grade, from his adopted father, Mingšui, after the latter had committed suicide in the Myanmar war in the late 1760s. Recalling Mingšui's tragic death three decades earlier, Qianlong mourned, sentimentally, another loss in the decorated family.[113]



MAP 2.3. The Demise of the Yao-Wang Force, 1797–1798. Arrows indicate the Yao-Wang force's movements between its departure from Sichuan in 1797 and its elimination in the spring of 1798 in Yunxi, Hubei.

Unable to cross the Han River, the Yao-Wang force pushed into Shaanxi in the tenth month after numerous failed attempts. Once

again, Hubei was free of conflict, except for the last few hundred Changyang rebels holing up in Changle.[114] As reconstruction was again started in Hubei, southern Shaanxi was on high alert. Because Li Shu's regiment, numbering perhaps twenty thousand, had been in Xixiang, trying to cross the Han River, Qin Cheng'en spared no effort to strengthen the river defense. He had all boats moored by the north bank, sent thousands of reinforcements to Hanzhong, where the water was especially shallow in the winter, and hired thousands of militiamen along the river.[115] Qianlong also directed Solon soldiers to be sent to Ziyang to guard the river's southernmost point.[116] Having pursued the Yao-Wang force to Shaanxi, Mingliang and Delengtai engaged it in Zhenping for several days in the middle of the tenth month, allegedly killing five to six thousand and capturing 365, half of whom were women and children, letting only four thousand men escape—as usual, the figures may be exaggerated.[117] Then the Yao-Wang force moved to Hanzhong, suffering more casualties en route, as it was frequently assaulted, and leaving many women and children behind.[118] Meanwhile, many Xiangyang insurgents who had stayed in Sichuan, including Wang Tingzhao, moved to southern Shaanxi. Having reunited on the Han River's upper valley, the Xiangyang rebels tried to cross the river numerous times, but all unsuccessfully.[119]

To lure some of the Qing forces away from the riverbank, the Xiangyang insurgents moved to Ningqiang and then Sichuan's Guangyuan. They also assailed the official route south of the river, making it unpassable at one point, which interrupted Qing official communication. After having been beaten down by Mingliang and others, they returned to Hanzhong and split into two groups: Yao Zhifu, Wang Conger, and Li Shu led their main force and headed to Sichuan's Tongjiang, while Gao Junde led another group westward.[120] The Qing forces were divided as well. While Mingliang went to intercept Gao, Delengtai pursued the main force. At the beginning of 1798, the two Xiangyang groups briefly merged and tried, unsuccessfully, to link up with the Sichuan rebels. At this point, Wang Conger suggested that her group go back to southern Shaanxi, as if posed to assault the Shaanxi-Sichuan artery, so that an opportunity could be created for Gao to cross the Han River.[121]

This scheme worked. On 02/12/24, in the depths of the winter when the riverbanks were covered with snow and ice, Gao Junde led his group of several thousand people and forded the Han River at Nanzheng's Zhoujiaping. On learning of the crossing, Mingliang and Delengtai led their eight thousand troops and crossed the river to the north but left the Yao-Wang force to lesser commanders and five to six thousand troops on the south bank, as they thought that the Qing forces on the north bank, all being infantry, were weak.[122] However,

Qianlong was greatly infuriated, calling their move a "grave mistake," as he believed, in fact rightly, that Gao's crossing was meant to entice the Qing crack forces away from the riverbank so that the Yao-Wang force could make a crossing. Moreover, he suspected that the main rebel force might already have crossed the Han River but that Mingliang and Delengtai had concealed it from him in fear of severe punishment. Qianlong deprived the two first of their feather trappings and then of their hereditary positions. He scolded them bitterly for being selfish because they had brought all the elite bannermen with them, and he obliged them to redeem their crime by wiping out all the rebels in Shaanxi.[123] Once again, Qianlong turned to Lebao, directing him to rush to Hanzhong to supervise the operations by the river,[124] but Lebao managed to persuade Qianlong to change his mind, as related previously.

After having crossed the Han River, Gao Junde attacked, but failed to take, the city of Hanzhong, which did not have a sizable force. He then moved toward Shaanxi's borders with Hubei and Henan but was soon closely encircled by Mingliang, Delengtai, and the Shaanxi forces. In Henan, Jing'an, once learning of Gao's crossing, also stepped up border defenses, which won Qianlong's approval.[125] By the second month, Gao's division had been cornered in southeastern Zhen'an and reduced to perhaps a couple of thousand after several fierce battles.[126] Yet Qianlong was not pleased. With the Yao-Wang force still on the south bank, false news of its crossing the river reached Beijing repeatedly, each time causing alarm and stirring up Qianlong's fury toward Mingliang and Delengtai.[127] On 03/02/15, on the heels of another false alarm, Qianlong dismissed Mingliang and ordered him escorted to the capital for trial. He also stripped Mingliang's two sons of their positions as imperial guardsmen and sent them to Rehe as hard laborers. In Mingliang's position he appointed Yimian. Nevertheless, Qianlong backed down in a matter of days: he first allowed Mingliang to stay in Shaanxi fighting, and he then gave Mingliang a minor title, "leader" (*lingdui*), citing the fact that Yimian was both aged and ill.[128] A common royal scheme, such rituals—dismissal, penalizing the sons, and ultimately retaining—were meant to spur Mingliang as well as his colleagues to fight more earnestly. Mingliang surely got the message.

The main Xiangyang force did not make the crossing until the beginning of the second month (but the news did not reach Beijing until after Mingliang's dismissal). After Gao Junde's crossing, it first moved from Guangyuan to Nanjiang, and then reentered Shaanxi at Xixiang's Jianchiba on 03/01/24. Having moved to the upper valley, they forded the Han River, on 03/02/03 or the following day, between Chenggu and Nanzheng not far from where Gao had crossed.

Ke Fan failed to stop them.[129] After the crossing, Li Shu led seven to eight thousand rebels and headed north toward Xi'an. Through the Yeyuguan pass, they made their way to Meixian and Zhouzhi, causing a great deal of alarm in Xi'an. Not until the rebels reached the vicinity of Xi'an were they stopped by Qin Cheng'en and Wang Wenxiong, who were later joined by Ke Fan and Xingzhao, the Jingzhou general. Unable to take Xi'an, Li Shu divided his force into two groups at the beginning of the third month; he led one eastward first and then headed south to Zhen'an, and the other moved to the west but was annihilated shortly after.[130] Li Shu's foray to Xi'an attracted some Qing forces so that the Yao-Wang force could move eastward toward the border. Late in the second month, the Yao-Wang group and Gao Junde's group joined forces in Zhen'an, but they were soon surrounded by Mingliang, Delengtai, and others, and all their attempts to penetrate Hubei's Yunxi were foiled.[131] At this moment, Eldemboo and his two thousand troops arrived in Shaanxi,[132] which made up for the loss of the valiant Salar Muslim soldiers, who returned home after having marched and fought with Mingliang since the previous autumn.[133]

In the late second month, the three Qing generals, Mingliang, Delengtai, and Eldemboo, pressed the Xiangyang force to northwestern Zhen'an. Following a fierce battle at Yezhuping, the Xiangyang insurgents again divided themselves into two groups, one led by Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger, and the other by Gao Junde, both heading to the border with Henan. Accordingly, Eldemboo pursued Gao (he then turned to take on Li Shu when the latter proceeded south from Xi'an), whereas Mingliang and Delengtai put pressure on the Yao-Wang force.[134] On 03/03/05, Mingliang and Delengtai cornered the Yao-Wang force on Shanyang's southern margin. After one whole day's fighting, which produced heavy casualties for the Yao-Wang force, the rebels infiltrated overnight into Hubei's Yunxi in groups; some of them might have forced their way through the closely guarded Manchuanguan. On the following day, aided by local troops and militiamen, Mingliang and Delengtai launched a pincer attack on the exhausted insurgents, still in the thousands (eight to nine thousand, as reported by Delengtai), and pushed them to Yunxi's Sanchahe (Three Fork River), where Yao Zhifu, Wang Conger, and some of their followers found a high point to ascend. When they failed to stop the Qing troops with rolling logs, Yao, Wang, and some of their escorts, including a dozen women, abandoned their horses, climbed up to the peak, and jumped off the cliffs. Yao died instantly, and Wang was seriously injured, unable to speak, but she acknowledged that she was "Qi Wang Shi" before being killed by her captors. The battle against the remaining rebels lasted until the

following morning.[135] Delengtai claimed that the Qing troops had killed more than seven thousand and captured more than one thousand but admitted that they had left the rounding up of all the scattered rebels to the local authorities. Apparently, many rebels managed to escape, including Wang Tingzhao. After her death, Wang Conger lived on in folklore, and she was featured as the rebel icon of the White Lotus War in late-twentieth-century China. However, her participation in the rebellion was brief; the conflict would long survive her. Besides, there were numberless other women who made an impact on the rebellion.

Taking full advantage of their remarkable mobility, the Xiangyang insurgents had persevered for two years. Nevertheless, they did not seem to have a sound strategy and often followed vague and even wishful ideas. At first, they looked forward to joining their counterparts in northern Sichuan. When this move proved not to be as promising as they had envisaged, they were seized by the idea of returning to Xiangyang. When that plan too fell short, for more than half a year they conjured up a new dream land in western Henan but had no clear idea how that plan would transpire. Consequently, they kept circling the Han River valley, desperately trying to cross the river first to its south bank and then to its north bank. Their single-mindedness gave their suppressors clear guidance in intercepting and battling them, which in fact offset the advantages resulting from their mobility. Contrary to the conventional wisdom that the Han River highlands in southern Shaanxi were the rebels' base area, the Xiangyang insurgents did not intend to take refuge there. Loathing the meagerness of the region, they had always intended to leave the Han River valley, treating the area only a passageway to their dream land.

Mingliang Slows Down

In exterminating the Yao-Wang force one month after it crossed the Han River in the spring of 1798, Mingliang and Delengtai exhibited their efficiency. Attributing the victory to the effect of the penalties he had rendered to Mingliang, the Qianlong emperor was now ready to pardon him. He first called Mingliang's two sons back from Rehe, placing them at the Imperial Hunting Office as underlings, and then returned to Mingliang the title of vice commander-in-chief along with its trappings.[136] Yimian defended his old friend also, stressing that Mingliang had never been meek in fighting, although he could be a bit "overcautious" sometimes.[137] After all, the war was still on; the savvy general was needed at the frontline.

After the demise of the Yao-Wang force, Mingliang, Delengtai, and Eldemboo turned to fight Li Shu and Gao Junde, who had not been with Yao and Wang in their last days. Having joined forces themselves

and taken in several Sichuan rebel groups that had penetrated southern Shaanxi, Li and Gao again attempted to go to Henan. They pushed toward Shaanxi's southeastern borders, trying to enter Henan in small groups. Unwilling to leave their home regions, many rebels of Sichuan and Shaanxi either surrendered or returned to Sichuan. After a bloody battle at Luonan's Liangchahe, during which the rebels vowed to revenge Yao Zhifu's and Wang Conger's deaths but ended up with great casualties including two of Gao Junde's brothers, they turned west.[138] Having shuttled back and forth on the north bank of the Han River, either combined or divided, the Li-Gao force approached the plank trail in the early summer; some insurgents even penetrated Gansu. For the first time Gansu was mobilized to tackle the rebels in its jurisdiction.[139]

On 03/05/23, Qianlong charged Mingliang and Delengtai (Eldemboo had been sent to Hubei) to clear all the rebels in Shaanxi within ten days and to go to Sichuan afterward.[140] As the rebels again split into small groups after their failed forays into Gansu, Mingliang and Delengtai parted. Delengtai thenceforth engaged the main group of the Li-Gao force and pursued it to Sichuan's Guangyuan. But Mingliang stayed in Shaanxi to round up those scattering in the area.[141] Despite Qianlong's repeated urging to wrap up his operations in Shaanxi and go to Sichuan, Mingliang slowed down. In the city of Mianxian, he took a five-day rest, throwing the reins to his soldiers, who then made the local residents resentful.[142] Apparently, Mingliang was not keen on going to Sichuan and working with Lebao. As he related, he had been the deputy to Wenfu, Lebao's father, during the second Jinchuan war, so that it was shameful to be subordinate to his former colleague's son, although Lebao was only a couple of years Mingliang's junior.[143] Mingliang's rivalry with Yongbao might have been a further factor. Since the Yao-Wang remnants were already in disarray, the arrival of another Xiangyang force in Shaanxi gave Mingliang sufficient reason to stay in Shaanxi.

The band was led by Zhang Hanchao. In his seventies, Zhang had been a sectarian teacher in Xiangyang, and he became one of the "marshals" once the uprising started. Zhang did not leave Sichuan for Hubei with Yao and Wang in 1797, but his whereabouts in Sichuan cannot be clearly traced. In the early spring of 1798, Zhang led about ten thousand rebels and trekked to Hubei along the route taken by Yao and Wang. In Hubei's Badong, Zhang's force, sometimes in dispatches, overran Guizhou, Xingshan, Donghu, Yuan'an, Dangyang, and Jingmen, driving western Hubei again into upheaval. The rebels kept recruiting and kidnaping locals, expanding their ranks allegedly to thirty thousand, as related in the Qing records. Wang Xin and Jing'an, who was appointed governor-general of Huguang on Zhang's

foray into Hubei, scrambled for the military forces to guard their jurisdiction. They also requested reinforcements from Lebao, as they were dismayed that no Qing troops had pursued Zhang from Sichuan. While criticizing Lebao again for driving the rebels to others' jurisdictions, Qianlong ordered Eldemboo and Xingzhao to Hubei.[144]

Like Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger, Zhang Hanchao also sought to cross the Han River to Henan. In the fourth month, Zhang's force reached Yicheng on the west bank of the Han River, but its attempt to take the city was foiled by Jing'an. Then Zhang went south along the river. Leading his two thousand troops, Jing'an kept Zhang away from the river, repeatedly repulsed him from the seat of Jingmen prefecture, and stopped him from attacking Dangyang and Jingzhou, forcing Zhang to turn back north. After Eldemboo and Xingzhao, who had arrived in Xiangyang late in the fourth month, joined Jing'an, they routed Zhang's band in several encounters early in the fifth month in Nanzhang. Yet Zhang Hanchao still attempted to cross the Han River; he seized many boats when he was driven to Gucheng. Only after another fiasco at Zhangcunpeng, in which thousands of his men were killed, did Zhang's force run westward toward Shaanxi in several groups late in the month; en route thousands of captured villagers escaped.[145]

On 03/06/12, Zhang and his group of no fewer than ten thousand entered Shaanxi's Pingli. Mingliang immediately moved there and join Eldemboo to tackle Zhang. Unable to move farther in southern Shaanxi, Zhang turned south to Sichuan's Taiping in the late summer. To move fast in mountainous Taiping, the rebels abandoned their horses and mules, and even killed some of their women and small children.[146] Because Eldemboo stayed in Taiping to nurse an illness, Mingliang took over the fighting, pushing Zhang back to Shaanxi in the end of the summer. Although Mingliang reported to the throne that his men had killed thousands of rebels in a battle on the border with Sichuan's Tongjiang, including two major chiefs, Li Huai and Zhan Shijue, there was neither praise nor reward from Qianlong, which contrasted with his jubilant reaction to Lebao's capture of Wang Sanhuai about the same time, as recounted below.[147]

In the following several months, Mingliang no longer struck his enemies decisively, let alone eliminating them, even though Zhang had been in despair and his energy had declined owing to his old age —he had let several younger chiefs lead the band in his place.[148] While Zhang went back and forth between Shaanxi and Sichuan and shuttled south of the Han River, looking for a chance to make the crossing, Mingliang marched after Zhang's band and made sure not to allow it to cross the Han River or return to Hubei (at one point, Zhang again approached Hubei's Badong from Daning).[149] In the late eighth

month, Qianlong again deprived Mingliang of his feather trappings, but it failed to work this time.[150]

On 03/11/04, Zhang and his band—a few thousand remained but barely a thousand of them able-bodied men—crossed the Han River to the north in Chenggu while Mingliang was fighting against some rebels who had infiltrated Shaanxi from Sichuan. After the crossing, Zhang's band ran to the Qinling Mountains and moved toward the border with Henan. At the beginning of 1799, Zhang made inroads into Henan. Having attacked but failed to take the city of Lushi, Zhang headed to Neixiang and Zhenping, and then to Nanzhao, Songxian, and Lushan. Shortly before the New Year in 1799, he turned southward to Nanyang. With so few people left, Zhang no longer dared to attack towns and villages but moved around in the mountains carried in a bamboo chair. Intercepted by Mingliang and the local forces, Zhang was unable to penetrate Hubei and returned to Shaanxi on New Year's Eve.[151] Although Zhang's two-month foray into Henan was a time of crisis, Mingliang was not hurried; he pursued his enemies from a distance with no intention to press hard. As Mingliang confessed later to a fellow official, he had purposefully delayed wiping out Zhang's group so that he did not have to go to Sichuan to report to Lebao. Contemptuous of Lebao, Mingliang had not obeyed his instructions and had not reported to him on his operations.[152] And chasing Zhang from one province to another gave Mingliang opportunities to claim funds from more than one province, in other words, to double-dip.

LEBAO'S DELAY TACTICS

Mingliang's delays were not atypical. In fact, 1798 witnessed the beginning of a long seesaw negotiation between the throne and its field commanders about when the war could end. As the conflict's epicenter had moved to eastern Sichuan, Lebao, the commander-in-chief, was the key figure in the saga. Under his auspices, progress was meager and slow in the making, whereas the Sichuan theater surpassed both Shaanxi and Hubei in war expenditures, consuming the lion's share of the war funds in 1797 and 1798. At first, the Qianlong emperor was most frustrated with the siege at Daning's Laomuyuan against ten-thousand-odd rebels led by Chen Chongde. From the summer of 1797, Guancheng and Liu Junfu had failed to conquer their forts for months, although the rebels had been reduced to several thousand by early 1798, and their supplies had run out—allegedly, they had to eat weeds.[153] Having repeatedly criticized the two generals, Qianlong dismissed both in the third month but enjoined them to stay put and finish the siege.[154] When Guancheng and Liu

finally crushed those forts late in the fourth month, they failed to catch Chen, who with his last men rolled down from the cliffs and were ambushed and annihilated ten days after by the militias on Daning's northern borders.[155] A similar scenario occurred at Kaixian's Kaizhouping, where Lin Lianggong had fortified on a mountaintop after withdrawing from Linjiangshi in early 1798, but the siege led by Liushiqi and Fusenbu had also been fruitless for months. Not until one month after the two generals were dismissed at Lebao's request did they capture this stronghold in the high summer. Lin, however, escaped.[156]

The other operations in eastern Sichuan were not in a promising state, either. After its unsuccessful assault on the seat of Yingshan county in the autumn of 1797, Luo Qiqing's White Band stayed in Yingshan and holed up on a mountaintop. In the late spring of 1798, the other rebel groups went back to Yingshan. While Ran Wenchou's Blue Band dug in near Luo's stronghold, Wang Sanhuai and Xu Tiande kept moving eastward. Shortly after, Huiling and Hengšui crushed both Luo's and Ran's forts. But Luo went off to fortify on another mountain, Jishan, also in Yingshan, and Ran holed up on a mountain, Dashenshan, in neighboring Quxian.[157] Meanwhile, Wang Sanhuai, Xu Tiande, and Fan Renjie were shuttling around in Quxian, Dianjiang, and Dazhou. They tried to take Dazhu, a county southwest of the city of Dazhou, but failed. After an encounter with Lebao in Liangshan in the early summer, Xu and Fan turned southward to Fengdu, while Wang headed north to Kaixian and Xinning.[158] Leaving the task of coping with Xu to Fucheng, the newly appointed Chengdu general to replace Guancheng, Lebao went after Wang Sanhuai himself.

Qianlong's impatience with the campaign in Sichuan as well as with Lebao grew with time. He often said he was "very unhappy" when reading Lebao's periodic long and detailed memorials, in which Lebao pooled all the reports from his subordinates, giving figures for rebels killed in the hundreds or thousands but always at the ready to emphasize that he could only clear the rebel bands one by one. Each time he promised to clear all the rebels soon, he would stress the difficulties standing in the way of doing so or he would report that a new group of rebels had suddenly emerged and that he had to focus on them first, instead of fighting against the "established" groups.[159] Repeatedly "severely reprimanding" Lebao, Qianlong seemed to be at a loss when confronting the cunning commander. When Shaanxi was cleared of the rebels in the sixth month—the remnants of the Xiangyang insurgents were pushed to either Sichuan or Hubei—Qianlong set a deadline to end the whole campaign at the end of the seventh month.[160]

This deadline was soon upended. First, the Xiangyang rebels

returned to Shaanxi. Then, at the end of the summer, Gao Junde and Li Shu went to Sichuan and joined Ran Wenchou at Dashenshan.[161] Furious at Delengtai, who had been pursuing this band, Qianlong deprived him of all his titles except that of banner vice commander-in-chief. But the demotion failed to stimulate Delengtai; the siege at Dashenshan did not proceed speedily.[162] When Wang Sanhuai reached Yunyang in the sixth month, he built forts on a mountaintop surrounded by cliffs at Anleping and sent his deputy, Leng Tianlu, to nearby Zushiguan to build another stronghold to flank his own.[163] With the rebels resuming their mountaintop tactics and digging in, the Qing forces in the tens of thousands again locked in their typical sluggish sieges. Turning up the heat, Qianlong criticized Lebao for having been unable to catch any rebel chief or clear any rebel group for nearly half a year but only feeding him with empty words to buy time, and he threatened to remove Lebao from the commander-in-chief position. On the first day of the eighth month, Qianlong set up a new deadline: to finish off all rebel groups by the end of the month.[164]

To mollify the emperor and to buy more time, Lebao had to produce some major achievement. In fact, he had a card up his sleeve. Not seeing a future in continuing the rebellion, after he went to Anleping, Wang Sanhuai began negotiations for surrender with the Qing side. Wang had tried to persuade Leng Tianlu to surrender with him, but Leng rejected the proposal. Lebao sent Liu Qing, a local official with a good reputation among the people in eastern Sichuan and allegedly even trusted by the rebels, to meet with Wang several times in his stronghold.[165] Nevertheless, Lebao did not reveal his dealings with Wang in his memorials. Instead, he continued reporting in detail on his attacks of Wang's stronghold, giving the impression that his men were doing their best to try to take the rebel forts.[166]

Late in the seventh month, when Wang Sanhuai was ensured his safety by Lebao, he went to Lebao's headquarters and surrendered while holding a local gentry member sent by Lebao hostage. Lebao instantly arrested Wang and more than three hundred insurgents who had accompanied him. Nevertheless, in his memorial reporting Wang's capture, Lebao said that he had launched a forceful offensive against Wang's forts while sending a detachment to check Leng Tianlu at Zushiguan and that, in fear that Wang might be killed in battle or commit suicide, he had had a local gentry member named Liu Xingqu inform the rebels that they would be given a chance to live if they, chiefs or followers, surrendered. It was then, according to Lebao, that Wang and his followers went to Lebao's headquarters and, abandoning their weapons and kneeling, surrendered. Not keeping his word, however, Lebao ordered that all 367 surrendered rebels be beheaded.[167] Like Funing's slaughter of surrendered rebels in Laifeng,

this incident would deter other rebels from surrendering in the years to come.

When Lebao's memorial reached Beijing on 03/08/09, the two emperors, Qianlong and Jiaqing, were receiving Mongol dignitaries at their summer palace. Greatly satisfied with both Wang's arrest and the timing of the good news—Qianlong could brag about it to the Mongol guests—Qianlong praised Lebao profusely and showered him with many gifts, in contrast to his reaction after Mingliang and Delengtai's victory over Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger. Numerous edicts were issued celebrating this "big victory." One among them was issued in the name of the retired Qianlong emperor, the "supreme emperor," in which Qianlong granted Lebao the highest noble title, duke of the first grade, and also rewarded the grand councilors, among whom Hešen and Fuchang'an were given noble ranks for their advisory role and for drafting edicts.[168] This was one of the few occasions on which Qianlong would issue an edict on his own behalf since his retirement —he normally took Jiaqing's persona when giving directives. Then Qianlong pardoned Yongbao and allowed Yongbao's two sons to return to Beijing from Rehe and serve as underlings at the Imperial Hunting Office.[169] However, this was the last jubilation in Qianlong's long life.

Following this "victory," Qianlong pressured Lebao and other generals to finish the campaign speedily. In his view, Leng Tianlu's group of several thousand was the last major rebel band in Sichuan, which should have been demoralized by the elimination of Wang Sanhuai's group. He directed Lebao to go to Mingliang's aid as soon as Leng's band was finished off.[170] Nevertheless, for Lebao, Wang's demise gave him some leverage in his bargaining with the throne; he would not finish off Leng before he fully cashed in this credit. Late in the eighth month, Lebao recommended a batch of his subordinates for promotion and requested that Yongbao, who had just been set free from jail, be sent to the frontline, allowing him to redeem his past mistakes under Lebao's "guidance." Lebao said that he would have felt "unease" if Yongbao, in his prime, "strong and stout," was idle at home. Since Yongbao would not return to the war without a title, Lebao's request was no more than requesting a position for Yongbao, who had not been given any on his pardon. However, Qianlong, increasingly impatient with Lebao's lethargic siege against Leng, rejected this proposal.[171] Unsurprisingly, the siege at Zushiguan would last for months.

Meanwhile, the sieges against Luo Qiqing and Ran Wenchou also proceeded slowly. Not until the mid-seventh month did the Qing forces destroy the forts at Dashenshan. Ran Wenchou, Li Shu, and Gao Junde led their men to Luo Qiqing's forts at Jishan for refuge.

However, Luo refused to accept them because of conflicts with Ran Wenchou. Therefore, Ran holed up near Luo's forts, but the Xiangyang insurgents left for Shaanxi, pursued by Eldemboo.[172] Shortly after, Xu Tiande and Fan Renjie, who had been rambling in Zhongzhou, Chongqing, and Shunqing prefectures, reached Yingshan and camped near Luo and Ran. The Qing forces concentrated first on assailing the Xu-Fan force, forcing it to pull out. In the late eighth month, Xu and Fan returned. They first holed up near Luo's and Ran's strongholds and then abandoned their forts and joined Luo at Jishan when attacked.[173]

The convergence at Jishan of most of the remaining rebel forces from both Sichuan and Hubei, perhaps totaling thirty thousand, might have been by design. Piecemeal evidence shows that the plan's architect might have been Wang Tingzhao, who seemed to have become the soul of the rebellion after the deaths of Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger. No longer leading an independent band himself, Wang, who was accompanied by hundreds of insurgents, had been shuttling between different bands, trying to coordinate concerted actions among the insurgents. Having arrived at Luo Qiqing's stronghold with Xu Tiande's band, Wang evoked Luo's awe by showing the latter some sectarian scriptures and portraits. Wang even produced a person named "Liu Leng," who had a Jiangnan accent, and presented this Liu to the rebel chiefs as the most senior master of their teaching, even higher in position than Liu Zhixie. This Liu Leng then granted titles to the rebel chiefs and made promises to them.[174] Most likely, Wang was attempting to revive their rebellion by forging a puppet leader to replace Liu Zhixie, whose absence had been detrimental to the cause. Mysteriously, "Liu Leng" did not resurface for the rest of the rebellion.

The siege of Jishan reached the tipping point only after Eldemboo pushed Gao Junde and Li Shu back to Jishan and joined the siege—likely Gao and Li's return to Jishan was also preplanned. Following an all-out attack by the Qing forces, allegedly killing thousands, the insurgents abandoned their forts early in the tenth month. Gao Junde and Wang Tingzhao ran away. Ran Wenchou led the remainder of his Blue Band to Tongjiang. Luo Qiqing and his surviving followers in the thousands moved to another mountain of Yingshan. They commandeered the local residents' forts on the mountaintop and their supplies but were soon besieged by their suppressors. At the end of 1798 (early in the eleventh month), when their supplies ran out, Luo and several thousand of his followers escaped by charging the Qing bastions in the night, despite great casualties in the thousands including Luo's father. They proceeded to another mountain nearby, but this time they did not hold their forts for long before Eldemboo and Delengtai crushed them late in the eleventh month. Days later, on

03/12/02 (January 7, 1799), Luo Qiqing and several of his relatives were captured in a cave.[175] In the series of battles crushing the rebel strongholds, Eldemboo's regiment was most instrumental. One officer under him, Yang Yuchun, a Sichuan native and a regional vice commander (*fujiang*), began to distinguish himself as an effective commander. He was finally promoted to regional commander following the demise of Luo's group. His previous contributions from the fighting in southwestern Hubei against Lin Zhihua and Tan Jiayao's group had not been always recognized; Eldemboo usually gave priority to Manchu officers over their Chinese counterparts when requesting rewards and promotions.

The meeting of several rebel bands at Jishan had alarmed Qianlong. He had repeatedly ordered Lebao to head there and leave the siege against Leng Tianlu to others. But Lebao argued that his leaving would weaken the pressure on Leng and that there were already enough troops and generals at Jishan.[176] Furious and frustrated, Qianlong reproached Lebao again and again, blaming him for having "always muddled his duty" and for "idling there with his troops." He threatened to strip Lebao of the dukedom he had just received and his hereditary noble rank inherited from his grandfather.[177] Yet Lebao was unmoved, continuing to conduct the war in his own way. He periodically reported his unremarkable progress, now with a longer interval in between, and always stressed the difficulties he met, including autumn rain and fog. Finally, when their supplies ran out, Leng Tianlu and his men broke out on 03/12/21 and headed north to Kaixian and Dongxiang. Although Lebao reported their escape as a victory, his memorial did not reach Beijing until several days after Qianlong died.[178]

Back in his hometown, Tongjiang, Ran Wenchou and the survivors of his band, allegedly ten thousand, dug in on a mountaintop at Mabazhai, which had cliffs on one side and perilous paths to the top on the other sides. With the forbidding winter climate, attackers were slow in making progress. But the insurgents were short of food; Ran had to send out dispatches to loot nearby towns. After having caught Luo Qiqing, Delengtai and Huiling turned north to Mabazhai, while Eldemboo headed south to fight Xu Tiande. On 03/12/30, the eve of Chinese New Year, the Qing forces ambushed the rebel dispatches going out for food. Then, in the early morning of New Year's Day, they launched a full-scale offensive, using grenades to set the forts ablaze. Many rebels were burned to death or killed, some rolled down the cliffs, and more than one thousand insurgents and their families were captured, including Ran Wenchou, who had been seriously injured and was subsequently executed by "a thousand cuts."[179] However, many of Ran's men got away, among whom was Ran

Tianyuan, Wenchou's nephew and a fierce warrior.[180]

Clearly, Delengtai and Huiling did not intend to round up Ran's men in this battle. In fact, Qianlong's new policy of rewarding the troops should have played a part. Having realized that granting rewards for killing a certain number of rebels, as he had done in the first two years of the war, induced his generals to exaggerate or falsify the numbers of killed rebels, or kill the civilians kidnaped by the rebels to augment their achievements, Qianlong made catching or killing rebel chiefs the new criterion for rewards. The generals, therefore, changed their strategy correspondingly. The new scheme was, as the Jiaqing emperor later put it, "catching only one bandit chief but letting other bandits run away."[181] Thereafter, the defeated insurgents would soon regroup and produce new chiefs, which gave the armies new opportunities for rewards. Indeed, from late 1798, the throne heard more and more new names of rebel chiefs.

The sieges in Sichuan in 1798, some lasting into early 1799, were the last such operations in this long war. Having failed to hold all their strongholds, the surviving insurgents abandoned their mountaintop tactics again, and for good, and would mainly resort to mobile and guerrilla warfare. After having broken out from Jishan, Xu Tiande and Fan Renjie led their band, arguably the most forceful in the Sichuan theater, and rambled in the areas between Dazhou and Chongqing.[182] At the end of 1798, Fan Renjie parted with Xu Tiande and led a large contingent to Shaanxi, again trying to cross the Han River to its north bank. The constant movement of the insurgents between Sichuan and Shaanxi kept the Han River valleys on high alert.[183] Another Xiangyang band, led by Wang Guangzu, had targeted the city of Chongqing since late 1798. It circulated on the city's outskirts and, more than once, thrust into Jiangbei county, which was separated from Chongqing by the Jialing River.[184] Unable to take this major city, Wang moved northeastward north of the Yangzi River, but one of Wang's dispatches had joined Xu Tiande when the latter reached the east bank of the Jialing River at the beginning of 1799. Xu's attempt to cross the river at Dingyuan was foiled, and the rebels were repulsed by the local militias. Yet their intent to go to western Sichuan, which had not been penetrated by insurgents, alarmed the Qing side; Lebao hurried Eldemboo to the lower Jialing River valley to tackle Xu, but he stayed in the area south of Dazhou himself to continue his futile pursuit of Leng Tianlu.[185]

Months after Yao Zhifu and Wang Conger had died and Wang Sanhuai was caught, the rebellion was still viable. Anxious to see the final victory, Qianlong had set one deadline after another, but all were missed. Even in his eighties, the retired Qianlong emperor had shown a remarkable level of energy and lucidity.[186] Reading through all the

memorials from the front and giving directives at every step of the operations, he had been the campaign's helmsman for three years. He tallied the numbers of rebels killed and captured, and matched the information in the memorials with the maps submitted.[187] He was quick in pointing out questionable information, contradictions, and absurdities, and relentlessly ridiculed his commanders for those.[188] Knowing full well that his generals did not fight wholeheartedly, he did not accept their usual excuses of topographical impediments, natural elements, and shortage of forces. Instead, he depicted the campaign in the following way: the generals amassed elite troops to guard themselves and squandered war funds to enrich themselves; they moved slowly and lagged behind the rebels; whereas the rebels were swift and adept in negotiating mountains and rivers, the troops were slowed down by mountains and had to wait for boats whenever reaching a river, even a shallow one; in fighting, the troops first fired a few rounds with muskets and cannons and then used militiamen to engage the rebels; if the rebels had superiority, the troops ran away to avoid a tough fight; and the generals underreported their own casualties but exaggerated the numbers of rebels killed—and many killed and captured were in fact coerced civilians including the elderly, women, children, and the disabled.[189]

Qianlong was not blind to the pathetic state of the campaign. Nevertheless, he did not seem to have the means to turn it around. He often allowed himself to be swayed by his field commanders and easily changed his decisions. More seriously, he was not willing to take tough actions against those generals whose behavior had warranted discipline. He did no more than repeatedly give them "severe reprimands," although he clearly knew that his criticism was not effective. In the last months of his life, the eighty-seven-year-old Qianlong was not as full of vigor as before.[190] Still refusing to hand the reins to his son, he wrote fewer and shorter comments and directives on the memorials from the front. Sometimes anxiety and frustration were expressed in his mention of "longing" (*pan*) or, more poignantly, "eager longing" (*qiepan*). Of course he was longing for triumph. As the end of the third year of the Jiaqing reign (February 4, 1799) came near, he expressed his increasing despair and anger to Lebao:

> It is now already the mid-eleventh month. I look forward to victories more and more eagerly with the passing of the days. But no division [of our forces] has cleared a single band of bandits. If you continue procrastinating like this without any sense of shame and do not work together and wholeheartedly to finish your assigned tasks within this year, you are truly heartless, and your crime is unredeemable.[191]

Two weeks later, Qianlong reproached Lebao again:

> Lebao leads massive forces and has besieged the debilitated bandits for several months, but he has not made any progress, procrastinating and taking his duty lightly. What is his intent? If you know that you are not able to do it, you ought to state it clearly and truthfully. But you have delayed for so long, demoralizing the armies and exhausting them for nothing. Ask yourself on a quiet night: do you still have a conscience?[192]

Invoking conscience did not seem to work. On 03/12/28, three days before the New Year, on receiving another report from Lebao bearing no good news, Qianlong was “deeply disappointed” and “truly enraged.” Again he repudiated Lebao as “untrustworthy” for he gave only empty promises but had not achieved anything in months. All he could do, however, was to give both Lebao and Mingliang “severe reprimands,” again and for the last time.[193]

CHAPTER 3

REFORM
1799

> Lebao has not made any [workable] arrangements since taking the commandership. I am deeply ashamed of myself for not being able to judge people rightly and naming him grand minister commander. I must learn a lesson from this to avoid the same mistake in the future.
>
> —THE JIAQING EMPEROR, 1799

WHEN the Qianlong emperor passed away at the beginning of 1799, the Jiaqing emperor, who had been under his father's "tutelage" for three years, finally took the reins of government. The debut of Jiaqing's rulership was marked by a dramatic act: he purged Hešen, the man on whom Qianlong had depended for decades. Although common wisdom takes the purge as a signal of Jiaqing's determination to rectify court politics, his more urgent agenda, which has been ignored or downplayed by historians, was to put the derailed suppression campaign back on track and have it quickly achieve its end. Yet his revamping of the campaign leadership proved to be more difficult than the removal of Hešen. After months of strenuous wrestling with the commanders and viceroys, Jiaqing cashiered most of them, including Lebao and Mingliang, and sent to the war zone several new leaders known for their high character: Songyun, Kuilun, Nayancheng, Taibu, and Guwanghing. Under them began a spirited rectification of war finances starting in the autumn of the year. Initially shocked by Hešen's fall and the waves of harsh criticism and disciplinary acts of the emperor, the field commanders nevertheless resisted the war-front reforms, persisting in their old ways of fighting and spending. Consequently, the campaign failed to overcome the stalemate. As had occurred under his father, Jiaqing's deadline to end the war was missed again and again as the year progressed.

On 04/01/03, two days after the New Year, Qianlong issued the last edict of his life, again expressing his eagerness to see a final victory in the campaign against the rebels but comforting himself with the thought that his armies would triumph within days.[1] He passed away later that day. Qianlong's death freed his son, Jiaqing, who immediately took over the rulership, to carry out his own policies. However, in establishing himself as the new sovereign and hence the paramount authority in the suppression war, Jiaqing first had to confront Hešen, who had not shown due respect to Jiaqing and whom many high-ranking officials held in greater awe than they did the young emperor—so much so that a viceroy sent his condolences on Qianlong's death to Hešen instead of to Jiaqing.[2] At the war front too, many involved in the war stewardship took Hešen as their patron and protector.

On the day of Qianlong's passing, Jiaqing was occupied with onerous rituals. He could only briefly enjoin all the commanders at the front, in one of the many edicts he issued, to take into consideration the Qianlong emperor's favor, trust, and instructions; be reenergized; and wipe out the rebels quickly.[3] On the following day, however, Jiaqing issued a sternly worded edict, arguably the first document in which he could freely express his own opinions and feelings, to Lebao, Huiling, Hengšui, Fucheng, Yimian, Jing'an, Qin Cheng'en, Wesibu (who succeeded Jing'an as Henan's governor), Eldemboo, Mingliang, and Delengtai.[4] Letting out his pent-up anger and frustration, Jiaqing sharply criticized both military and civil officials for turning the campaign into a steppingstone for promotions and awards, embezzling war funds, cheating the throne by reporting phony victories, and glossing over their defeats. Unequivocal and unforgiving, he pointed out that the reason for the "shameless" and "selfish" generals to have deliberately delayed finishing the campaign was profiteering. Jiaqing also accused officials and functionaries in the capital who had sought after opportunities to go to the front of seeking to profit from the campaign. Those who returned, the emperor stated, all became instantly affluent—even those who used to have meager fortunes—often asking for leave to go back to their hometowns to purchase property. Then, Jiaqing blamed his father, Qianlong, for being too lenient in his last years toward the generals, often granting them awards for small achievements but giving them only light or symbolic punishments when they failed to perform their duties—and even those light punishments were soon lifted. Although many generals might have been equally or even more guilty, as Jiaqing furiously pointed out, only one person, Yongbao, had been put on trial, and he was soon released from jail. Jiaqing set up a new

deadline, the spring of the same year, for the generals to finish the campaign. Warning them that he would be stricter than his father when it came to reward and punishment, he vowed to inflict severe punishment on the ones who failed to meet this deadline.

On the following day, Jiaqing continued lashing out at his generals when he responded to a memorial by Yimian. He criticized them for not leading the fight themselves but passing their days sitting in their headquarters far from the battlefields enjoying banquets and entertainment, only sending lesser officers to fight and then letting their secretaries scramble up memorials once every several days based on whatever was fed to them by those officers. He accused them of not paying attention to their armies so that their subordinates misappropriated the stipends of vacant rolls, which led to a shortage of military personnel and a waste of state funds. He also questioned the practice of hiring so many militiamen, calling it another black hole.[5] Apparently Jiaqing had a better grasp of the many drawbacks and abuses in the campaign than his father had had—likely he had sources other than official correspondence. The unusually harsh tone of those edicts foreshadowed Jiaqing's drastic act.

Five days after Qianlong died, on 04/01/08, Jiaqing dismissed Hešen from all his positions and arrested him. Fuchang'an, the vice minister of revenue and Hešen's right hand, was also dismissed and arrested. Among the twenty "crimes" of which Hešen was accused, most were related to the violation of etiquette, disrespect to the Qianlong emperor, and greedy exaction and possession of money and treasures, including certain luxury beads and jade items forbidden to be possessed by nonroyalty.[6] However, the gravest "crime," as Jiaqing emphasized, was that Hešen had hindered the suppression campaign by delaying forwarding reports from the front to the throne, making him responsible for the campaign's slow and unsatisfactory progress. This point was reiterated by Jiaqing time and again. One of those statements reads:

> The sectarian bandits have been making trouble for three years, but they have not been wiped out. In figuring out its root cause, I think it was because Hešen held back the reports from the front and was domineering [in directing the war], which hindered military affairs. As a result, the armies in the different theaters did not dare to report the truth and waited and delayed so that the campaign has not been finished after such a long time.[7]

What had happened was that, when memorials conveyed bad news such as defeats and heavy casualties, commanders would enclose a letter to Hešen, begging him not to deliver the memorial or to delay its delivery to the emperor.[8] This was not done gratis; the commanders had to compensate the man for the favor. Without knowledge of those

dealings, Qianlong had valued Hešen's handling of the war correspondence so much that he awarded Hešen with a dukedom after Lebao's capture of Wang Sanhuai. In Qianlong's own words, Hešen "takes part in making critical decisions and writing edicts on instruction; he handles everything single-handedly, working diligently day and night."[9] Jiaqing, apparently neglected by Hešen when it came to sharing information from the front, made this the chief grand councilor's biggest "crime."[10]

Hešen's acquisitiveness and enormous property holdings, albeit dramatically exaggerated, fed the popular belief that Jiaqing had removed him for his corruption.[11] Nevertheless, Jiaqing made it clear that this was not his priority: "My reason for severely punishing Hešen is his crime of spoiling critical military affairs, whereas his various crimes of taking graft and being self-serving are only minor ones."[12] To underscore Jiaqing's statement, nowhere was Hešen blamed for the excessive funding of the campaign, explicitly or implicitly, in the long list of accusations against him. Despite the greed he exhibited in private, never turning down gifts and bribes, Hešen had maintained a public persona as a stern and rule-abiding minister, even in dealing with his protégés. He had overseen several financial reforms and prosecuted a few well-known corruption cases. As one of the leading compilers of the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, Hešen had tried to enforce it after its promulgation, which often brought him into conflict with the commanders.[13] Having screened Delengtai's many claims for funds in the White Lotus campaign, Hešen turned them down one by one, as they were not stipulated in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, and ruled that Delengtai pay back the overclaimed funds.[14] Three weeks before his arrest, Hešen declined a request from Henan for a sum of nearly 85,000 taels to pay more than 56,000 militiamen, arguing that there was no proof that all those militiamen had served for the same length of time and that they had not received their pay for the time reported.[15] To be sure, Hešen's two-facedness makes it difficult to gauge his impact on the campaign's finances. On the one hand, he might have readily accepted bribes from officials and commander and sometimes rendered protection to them.[16] On the other hand, Lebao and others complained about Hešen after his purge for being inflexible and overly stringent about both war expenditures and promotion recommendations, not allowing breaches of the rules. Concurring with Lebao on the complaints against Hešen, Jiaqing assured Lebao that his administration would give the campaign more financial support as necessary.[17]

To fix the villain as being responsible for the impasse of the suppression campaign, Jiaqing compared Hešen to Oboi, the regent of the young Kangxi emperor; Nian Gengyao, the Yongzheng emperor's

longtime confidant; and Necin, the Qianlong emperor's first leading grand councilor, holding that all three had held positions similar to Hešen's. Among the three, Jiaqing thought that Hešen's case was most like that of Necin, although he asserted that Hešen's crime was more serious than those of all three. Greatly trusted by Qianlong, Necin met his demise during the first Jinchuan war, when he was sent to the front to supervise the war. Having failed to end the war swiftly as Qianlong had hoped and not having reported the situation at the front truthfully, Necin was ordered escorted to Jinchuan to commit suicide in front of the armies. For him to do so, Qianlong specially sent Necin a dagger left by his grandfather, Ebilun.[18] In likening Hešen to Necin, Jiaqing tried to justify his purge of Hešen as sanctioned by a tradition set by his father; nobody could be pardoned for hindering a military campaign from progressing to victory. Nevertheless, when it came to the punishment, Jiaqing backed down. Reasoning that noble status and royal connections should be taken into consideration, Jiaqing gave Hešen the penalty of committing suicide by hanging himself, which was a reduction from "death by a thousand cuts" as proposed by court officials. Jiaqing also reduced the suggested penalty to Fuchang'an from beheading to imprisonment awaiting death.[19]

Nevertheless, there was another strand in Jiaqing's motivation to rid himself of Hešen, but he chose not to make it public. Given that Hešen had been disrespectful to Jiaqing before and after his enthronement, the purge of Hešen was more like Kangxi's purge of Oboi. In fact, most monarchs of the Qing dynasty had exhibited the tendency of breaking from their predecessor's domineering courtiers, either removing them from their positions or publicly discrediting them.[20] Understandably, this mindset needed to be concealed. For Jiaqing, to make Hešen the scapegoat for the stymied campaign was convenient. As has been revealed in the previous chapters, it was the field commanders who were more culpable for the impasse. In addition, the speed of the central government in processing the war correspondence bore little on the result of the campaign, given the distance between the capital and the front (it took one to two weeks for ordinary mail to travel between the capital and the battlefield provinces). Hešen's main input in the war, in addition to advising Qianlong and drafting edicts, might have been in swaying Qianlong in appointments of commander-in-chief and other key positions at the front. Perhaps aware of the precariousness of his accusation, Jiaqing wanted to close the case quickly, declaring that the purge was limited to Hešen and Fuchang'an.[21]

Jiaqing kept his word. He did not purge or punish many of Hešen's protégés in the central bureaucracy.[22] Nevertheless, he reshuffled his cabinet and the Grand Council, filling it with people whom he trusted.

He did so swiftly and yet painstakingly. In the main, Jiaqing showed an inclination to lean toward people who had been oppressed by Hešen such as Agūi's associates. Jiaqing appointed Songyun, a Mongol bannerman, to head the Ministry of Revenue, which had been controlled by Hešen and Fuchang'an for many years. Songyun had been on the Grand Council but chose to serve as *amban* in Tibet in 1794 to keep his distance from Hešen.[23] For minister of personnel, Jiaqing first named Šulin, another Agūi associate but Hešen's enemy, and then appointed Kuilun, the governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang, who had made a reputation as a fighter against corruption.[24] Jiaqing put his two brothers, Yongxing and Yongxuan, on the Grand Council and in charge of some key ministries, albeit briefly.[25] He called his teacher, Zhu Gui, back to the capital from the south to become his chief advisor and reinstated grand councilors who had either taken leave or served in posts outside the capital, such as Qinggui and Wang Jie.[26] Jiaqing's purge of Hešen gave a strong signal that he might overhaul cronies-dominated court politics, making it more open to the input of upright and farsighted officials. Nevertheless, Jiaqing did not wish to discontinue Qianlong's practice of relying on a leading grand councilor; he attempted to anoint Nayancheng, Agūi's grandson and a junior member of the Grand Council, to fill the vacuum left by Hešen. The meteoric rise of Nayancheng was the most noticeable feature of the central government in the wake of Hešen's fall, as will be detailed later in the chapter.

Toward the ongoing war against the insurgents in Sichuan and Shaanxi, Jiaqing seemed to be iron-fisted; he immediately set his hand to rectifying its leadership. On the day of Hešen's arrest, in response to Lebao's memorial reporting that his troops had destroyed Leng Tianlu's forts but Leng had escaped, Jiaqing relentlessly chastised Lebao: "Lebao has overseen the campaign for nearly two years but has never been willing to work hard or to catch rebel chiefs quickly. His intention is to make the campaign last as long as possible in order to claim war funds constantly. The means he resorted to was to have Hešen protect and cover him, so he dared to procrastinate and play games."[27] Telling Lebao that Hešen had been dismissed and arrested, while reminding him of the late Qianlong's trust in and favors to him, Jiaqing exhorted Lebao to repent, increase his effort, and finish the campaign quickly. He warned him especially, with a threat of disciplinary action, not to try to buy time any longer by sending reports every several days without accomplishing anything.[28]

Jiaqing seemed to believe that Hešen's downfall had sent a clear and strong message to the commanders that the new sovereign was able to take tough action against even high-ranking personnel and that

they therefore would not take lightly the deadline of the spring of the same year to conclude the campaign. Meanwhile, faced with the same issue of a dearth of experienced generals that had troubled Qianlong, Jiaqing decided to retain Lebao as the campaign's commander-in-chief. On the day following his harsh criticism of Lebao, Jiaqing declared this, citing Lebao's contributions in the Miao campaign and his capture of Wang Sanhuai.[29] Ten days later, Jiaqing went one step further: he granted Lebao the title of "grand minister commander" (*jinglüe dachen*), the highest ad hoc title reserved for a royal commissioner in command of a war. Meanwhile, Jiaqing appointed Mingliang and Eldemboo as vice commanders-in-chief by conferring on them the title of "grand minister consultant" (*canzan dachen*), although he had good knowledge of Mingliang's lethargic operations against Zhang Hanchao.[30] As he reasoned, Lebao's new title would give him higher authority over all the commanders in the different theaters, thus leading to better coordination among them. He expected that this favor would spur Lebao to work harder. Referring to past successful grand minister commanders such as Fuheng in the first Jinchuan war and Ortai in suppressing the Miao uprising in Guizhou (in fact, the grand minister commander was Zhang Guangsi, not Ortai), Jiaqing enjoined Lebao to follow their example and to atone for his father's disgraceful fiasco in the second Jinchuan war. To win Lebao's loyalty, he went an extra length: he sent none other than Yongbao, who had been released from jail by Qianlong the previous autumn, to bring the seal of the grand minister commander to Lebao. Yongbao was also ordered to join Lebao's staff in directing the war, as had been requested by Lebao following Wang Sanhuai's capture but turned down by Qianlong.[31]

Within a few weeks of taking the reins of government, Jiaqing had shown a capricious streak in his character—he was constantly unsure of his own judgment and inclined to negate his earlier decisions. Twenty years senior to Jiaqing, Lebao, who was nearly sixty years old, must have read Jiaqing's contradictory treatment of him—first severely criticizing him but then retaining and even promoting him—as a sign of the new emperor's inexperience and uncertainty. Responding to both the emperor's criticism and his bestowal of a higher title, in a long and well-conceived memorial, Lebao vehemently defended himself and his way of conducting the campaign and challenged the emperor's deadline to complete the war in the spring. Again enumerating the rebels' advantages and the Qing forces' disadvantages, Lebao complained of the insufficiency of the Qing forces, as the rebel bands constantly split to form more bands (he claimed that there were ten to twenty such groups in Sichuan), thus building a case for not complying with the deadline. As always, he

claimed that he could only focus on one group at a time; it was not possible to fight against all of them with his limited forces.[32]

In reply to the emperor's criticism of their excessive expenditures, not only did Lebao deny that he or any commander had wasted or embezzled war funds, but he also fought back by complaining that the Ministry of Revenue under Hešen's auspices had been overly rigid regarding war expenditures and that some rules were impractical. He strongly defended his innocence in financial matters: "Even though this subject is extremely unwise, he would not commit this crime of misspending so that his own and his family's fortune would be jeopardized."[33] This bold stance may have served two purposes: to deflect the emperor's criticism and to clear himself from implication in the Hešen case. In categorically rejecting the emperor's criticism, Lebao seemed to be confident that the emperor had no means to discipline all the generals and viceroys in the campaign (virtually all of them had been guilty of one thing or another). Although Jiaqing did not believe Lebao's statements—it was well known that the generals spent war funds on banquets and entertainment at the front, as Jiaqing pointed out in response to Lebao's self-defense—he did not stiffen his position, given that he had already confirmed Lebao's leadership of the campaign. Instead, he resorted to moral suasion of Lebao and his cohorts, exhorting Lebao to listen to his conscience (*liangxin*) and not to make Jiaqing an unfilial son by failing to fulfill Qianlong's deathbed wish to wrap up the campaign quickly.[34]

JIAQING'S PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

Before his death, Qianlong had reiterated that surrendered rebels and coerced civilians should not be killed, even promising to reward those who turned against their comrades on the battlefield or helped catch their chiefs. He also made it clear that he did not wish to persecute all sectarians, as many did not join the uprisings. In Sichuan, he had warned the authorities not to hunt for all the Guolu bandits and salt smugglers so that they would not be pressed to join the rebels.[35] Nevertheless, those instructions had not been followed closely. Whereas some officials did try to distinguish kidnaped civilians from the true rebels, saving thousands of lives,[36] most commanders butchered captives indiscriminately and in cold blood, which outweighed the effect of the limited conciliatory actions.[37] Another obstacle was that some of the rebels' houses and land had been seized by their neighbors or the local authorities; the latter often sold them and pocketed the profits themselves.[38] Consequently, few surrendered, either for fear of being killed or having no home to return to.

During his interrogation in Beijing in late 1798, Wang Sanhuai

claimed that he and many others rebelled because the local officials' manhunt for sectarians left them no alternative. He himself was spurred to rise after his parents and wife had been locked up by the local authorities. Not mentioning the sectarian agents from Hubei who fermented the uprising, Wang portrayed himself as a victim. Yet he did not utter the catchword *guanbiminfan* (officials forced the people to rebel), according to the extant records of his interrogations. When both the Qianlong and Jiaqing emperors were briefed on Wang's interrogations, Qianlong was intrigued by Wang's statement that Xu Tiande, Luo Qiqing, and Ran Wenchou also harbored the intent of surrendering, but Qing officials ignored them. Qianlong then ordered Lebao to investigate and made it clear that he would accept their surrender as long as they were sincere, and he would give them a chance to live, as it would be more cost-effective than to fight against them.[39]

But Jiaqing saw different value in Wang's confessions. In an edict to Lebao on 04/01/20, Jiaqing placed the term *guanbiminfan* in the mouths of the insurgents, claiming that many of them counted local officials' extortion as their reason for joining the uprisings. He said in particular that, because Wang Sanhuai had used the term in describing the reason for his decision to rise, he had been hesitant to execute Wang.[40] Having minted the root cause of the rebellion, Jiaqing exculpated most of the rebels, declaring that they were "innocent people" (*chizi*), loyal to the emperor, but joined the rebellion because they had no choice. More important, Jiaqing held Hešen responsible for local officials' exploitative behavior; it was to satisfy Hešen's boundless greed that local officials had squeezed the ordinary people and then sent money to Hešen. Now that the villain had been removed, the emperor was ready to offer universal amnesty to all who had been either forced or misled to join the rebellion, giving all an opportunity to repent and start their lives anew—in the emperor's words, "to allow all to have a new life" (*xianyuweixin*).[41]

Considering it one of the keys to dismantling the rebellion, Jiaqing gave tremendous attention to conciliation. Recapitulating his new strategy as "carrying out military campaigns and conciliatory measures simultaneously" (*jiaofu jianshi* or *jiaofu bingyong*), he waged a psychological war in the early months of 1799. In numerous edicts, he explicated this carrot-and-stick strategy, calling on his troops to stop the indiscriminate killing of captives and exhibiting his sympathy profusely for the ordinary people who had lost their lives either as the rebels' human shields in battle or as victims of his troops' reckless slaying afterward. To make those coerced civilians aware of his new policy, Jiaqing instructed that it be widely broadcast.[42] When Wang Chengpei, a vice minister of punishment, suggested, among other

things, severely punishing the generals who continued killing surrendered rebels, Jiaqing endorsed the suggestion.[43] Knowing clearly that resettling displaced civilians would be a critical part of the new policy, Jiaqing sought effective ways to implement it. Nevertheless, it was an expensive and complex undertaking, requiring both funding and personnel. Although the central government deliberated several proposals, it was inconclusive about what precisely should and could be done to resettle the displaced.[44]

While mollifying the ordinary people constituted one prong of Jiaqing's psychological war, the other prong was to punish a few "wicked" local officials for being responsible for the uprisings. In Hubei, Chang Dankui, a vice prefect (*tongzhi*) of Wuchang, was named to be one. The accuser, Gu Jiqi, a censor, made sensational allegations against Chang shortly after Hešen's purge. Gu blamed Chang for having extorted Nie Jieren and hundreds of other people of money after he was sent to Yidu to persecute the sectarians in 1796. Chang released only those who paid but tortured and killed hundreds, some with their heads nailed to walls and some hammered to death in batches. Chang also escorted many to Wuchang for interrogation, packing hundreds in one boat; many died of hunger and cold, with their corpses floating in the Yangzi River. Echoing the emperor's rhetoric, Gu claimed that Chang Dankui was the culprit responsible for the uprising in Yidu and that the insurgents had no ill feelings toward the emperor even after they rebelled.[45] Alarmed by Gu's vivid charges, Jiaqing ordered that Chang be sent to Beijing for interrogation.[46] As for Sichuan, Jiaqing enjoined Lebao to investigate Dai Ruhuang, the former Dazhou magistrate, as he had heard that Dai was a wicked official.[47]

Nevertheless, the ensuing investigations fell short of establishing the two as evil officials par excellence. Interrogated at the Ministry of Punishment and facing torture, Chang Dankui denied almost all the charges. Although Chang had partaken in the persecution of the sectarians in Xiangyang in 1794, he had never set foot in Yidu in 1796.[48] Nie Jieren did not mention, when interrogated in Beijing, any pressure from local officials before he decided to revolt. Having gathered his information from people at the war front, Gu Jiqi had apparently taken unproved rumors as truth. The case of Dai Ruhuang was also problematic. In his seventies and partially paralyzed by strokes, Dai had not been able to perform his duty himself but let his aides and runners manage his office. Allegedly, he had a huge body of underlings, over four thousand in total, who rotated on duty in four groups. When Yimian came to Sichuan in early 1797, he dismissed Dai and sent him home to Chongqing because he could not function.[49] Although it is likely that those numerous underlings had extorted the

locals in Dai's name, it was difficult to pin the frail Dai down for being responsible for the uprisings in Dazhou and Dongxiang. Except for a few including Wang Sanhuai, none of a dozen or so captured rebels from Dazhou mentioned extortion or other evils by the local yamen when interrogated.[50] Yet, determined to adhere to his theory that wicked local officials caused the rebellion, Jiaqing pressed both the Ministry of Punishment and Lebao to continue their investigations for more and sound evidence. In the twentieth century, the two officials' alleged cruelties have been relished by some historians as perfect examples of the exploitation and oppression of the Qing.[51]

TAKING ON THE OLD GUARD

Many bureaucrats inside and outside of the capital city who had closely followed the unfolding of the rebellion were keener to point their fingers at commanders who failed to put down the rebellion speedily rather than local officials who were said to be responsible for its start. In response to Jiaqing's call for opinions and criticism of national politics, some chose to speak up. Song Shu, the young censor who had openly criticized field commanders in 1797, made noise again. Because he was then the educational commissioner of Shaanxi and Gansu, he had had the opportunity to observe the campaign from a close distance. He reproached the generals and provincial officials in Shaanxi for often lying about the campaign, particularly glossing over their defeats, seeking bribes from the logistical officials, and deliberately holding their troops back from finishing off their enemies.[52] Another poignant criticism of the armies' poor performance was again from Gu Jiqi. Gu reported to the throne some satiric ballads circulating in the war zone: "When the bandits come, there is no trace of the [Qing] troops; when the troops come, the bandits are all gone. How could that day come when the troops and bandits finally meet each other?" and "The bandits come without seeing the [Qing] troops; they only appear after the bandits leave."[53] Yet others were critical of the armies' inclination to catch only the insurgent chiefs while ignoring the rank and filers, which allowed for quick regrouping.[54]

Embracing those criticisms, Jiaqing was particularly annoyed by two problems exposed, the untruthfulness of the campaign reports and the way Qianlong had rewarded the troops. Relentlessly chiding the commanders for disguising their defeats and reporting fake victories, Jiaqing obliged them to repent and tell only the truth. Meanwhile, Jiaqing realized that his father's granting generous rewards only when an insurgent chief was caught might have discouraged the troops from eliminating the entire insurgent group, though he was also skeptical that all those captured chiefs were indeed chiefs. Therefore, he urged

the commanders to wipe out the entire group instead of taking only its head.[55]

To quell vociferous criticism that the throne had treated commanders too leniently, Jiaqing needed to penalize several people in the leadership. Again, Gu Jiqi singled out Yimian, Huiling, Qin Cheng'en, and Jing'an (Bi Yuan and Wang Xin had died) for being most responsible for the failure of the timely completion of the campaign.[56] On board with Gu, Jiaqing took a series of disciplinary actions in the first months of 1799. He first dismissed Yimian, accusing him of always staying in a safe place during a battle, although he had no longer joined military operations after his return to Shaanxi in early 1798. Jiaqing appointed Songyun, who was still on his way from Lhasa to Beijing, to be the new governor-general of Shaan-Gan.[57]

Then Jiaqing turned to Huiling, who had stayed in Sichuan after being removed from the commandership. Calling him the "slackest one" among all the leaders, Jiaqing sent him home when his mother died in the early summer but did not further punish him, for Huiling had participated in battles in which several rebel chiefs were caught.[58] Then Jiaqing removed Qin Cheng'en from his position as Shaanxi's acting governor when Qin's mother died. Shortly after, Qin was formally dismissed and sent to Beijing for trial when it was reported that he had refused to admit the refugees when the city of Xi'an was threatened by the rebels in early 1798, resulting in many refugees being drowned.[59] For the position left by Qin, Jiaqing appointed none other than Yongbao, who had just been reinstated and sent to join Lebao in Sichuan. Jiaqing also called back Yongbao's two sons from Ili and gave both the title of palace guardsman. As Shaanxi's new governor, Yongbao would encounter Mingliang, his old rival, face to face.[60]

In the Sichuan theater, Jiaqing targeted Fucheng, the Chengdu general. Although Qianlong had had a high opinion of him, once praising him as the "bravest" general, Fucheng had not fought a real battle since he took the position in the spring of 1798.[61] When he pursued a group of Xiangyang insurgents from Sichuan to Gansu in the spring of 1799, his army of seven thousand soldiers and militiamen were far behind the enemy, while causing great disturbance to the locals along their way. Jiaqing dismissed Fucheng and ordered an investigation of him. Although Lebao had initially been protective of Fucheng, he switched his position, for Fucheng did not improve after being censured, and, more important, Jiaqing was determined to use Fucheng to warn others. Despite his consideration of the death penalty, Jiaqing only demoted Fucheng to a soldier to redeem himself at the front, out of concern for the reputation of the

military were Fucheng to be executed.[62]

The harshest denunciation fell on Jing'an. A rarity among the leaders of the campaign, Jing'an was indifferent to money but serious about his responsibility. Moreover, he had been candid in criticizing his peers—he had been instrumental in Yongbao's downfall in 1796. Nevertheless, the fact that Jing'an's father was a distant nephew of Hešen made him vulnerable now. Jiaqing chastised Jing'an repeatedly and profusely, calling him a coward and accusing him of always avoiding the enemy, not telling the truth, and so on.[63] In the third month, Jiaqing dismissed Jing'an and sent him to Sichuan to take charge of war logistics, as the emperor admitted that Jing'an was clean in financial matters.[64] However, before long Jiaqing heard more accusations against Jing'an: he moved his encampment so frequently in order to avoid the enemy during Zhang Hanchao's foray into Hubei that his soldiers wore out one pair of shoes every day; he had unjustifiably penalized an officer, Guangfu, because the latter criticized Jing'an for his frequent moves. Consequently, Jiaqing removed him from his logistical duty and ordered an investigation. Although the drawn-out investigation yielded no hard evidence to prove the accusations, Jiaqing deprived Jing'an of his earldom (as suggested by Lebao) and exiled him to Ili.[65] Allegedly, Jiaqing once confessed to Zhu Gui that he needed to punish a high-ranking person to jolt the disappointing campaign, and he picked Jing'an.[66]

LEBAO'S DISMISSAL

Surviving the new emperor's first wave of censure and with a higher title in hand, Lebao should have felt secure. Acting on Jiaqing's directive that he should not pursue only a single insurgent band but stay at a central spot to supervise both the Sichuan and Shaanxi theaters, he moved to Dazhou's Baitaba late in the second month of 1799, leaving the fighting to Eldemboo, Delengtai, and others who had recently converged in eastern Sichuan per Lebao's order.[67] Sitting in his new headquarters, Lebao concentrated on dealing with the throne, on the one hand, and continuing his networking with generals and local officials, on the other. Lebao enthusiastically praised both Eldemboo and Delengtai, and warded off criticism against them, more often against Delengtai.[68] Complaining about Hešen for often axing the promotion slates recommended by war-front leaders, he requested that he be allowed to continue recommending officials and officers for promotions.[69] Once he received the emperor's reply, Lebao immediately petitioned for a promotion for Liu Qing, who was instrumental in Wang Sanhuai's capture, although Lebao did not mention that.[70] Meanwhile, Lebao tried to maintain a persona as a

stern chief commander. He was overtly critical of Mingliang, especially after Yongbao came into conflict with Mingliang in Shaanxi, as will be recounted below.[71] He punished lower-ranking officers at will, often without first reporting to the throne, taking away their trappings, demoting them, or giving them physical penalties such as whippings and placing them in cangues.[72] Initially trusting that Lebao could make a difference, Jiaqing sent Lebao all the memorials criticizing the campaign and offering suggestions. Dismissing many suggestions as "empty talk" and "useless," Jiaqing gave Lebao carte blanche to accept or ignore them.[73]

In early 1799, the two Xiangyang bands, the Blue Band led by the brothers Zhang Shilong and Zhang Shihu and the White Band led by Yang Kaijia and others, totaling more than ten thousand members, made inroads into Gansu from Sichuan, dragging Gansu into the conflict for the second time. Even though Gansu had sent 25,000 to 26,000 soldiers to Hubei and Sichuan, the remaining forces led by Guwangheo, the provincial judicial commissioner, and Jilantai, a regional commander in his late sixties, repulsed the insurgents twice in the early spring. Later, when some insurgents thrust north to Qinzhou and Pingliang, the Gansu forces thwarted their attack of the city of Gongchang and expelled them to Shaanxi's Longzhou.[74] In the early summer, the two Xiangyang bands returned to Gansu's southern border with Sichuan. To aid the strained Gansu forces, Hengšui was sent to Gansu; nearly five hundred Salar Muslim soldiers were also mobilized.[75] By the late sixth month, both bands were driven back to northern Sichuan via Lüeyang, although they kept shuttling across the border.[76]

In eastern Sichuan, Xu Tiande's Black Band lingered in Liangshan and Dianjiang in early 1799. It merged briefly with Leng Tianlu, and then Xu went to Dazhou, and Leng headed to Linshui.[77] Early in the third month, Eldemboo resumed action after a relapse of his illness. He first eliminated two rebel groups with allegedly thousands in each and then killed Leng Tianlu in battle before wiping out several thousand people under him in Guang'an, including one thousand fighters acquired from Xu Tiande. Cheered by Eldemboo's victories, Jiaqing lavished praise on Eldemboo, calling him "an honest and hard-working great general" and conferred on him the noble rank of baron in addition to awarding a one-month stipend to all the troops participating in the battle against Leng's band, which had not occurred for a long while.[78]

After Leng Tianlu's demise, however, no breakthrough was achieved in Sichuan for months. Eldemboo first tackled some smaller rebel groups south of Dazhou and then went to the northern border to intercept rebels returning from Gansu and Shaanxi, while Delengtai

pursued Xu Tiande to Kuizhou and then to Taiping.[79] As commander-in-chief, Lebao did not put any pressure on them to speed up. As he had always done, Lebao submitted a memorial periodically to brief the throne on the operations, trying to create the impression that the troops were fighting hard, but the rebels were too tough and numerous. He also disputed the emperor's campaign strategies and tactics, especially challenging Jiaqing's new conciliatory policy—Lebao declared that he always stressed killing all insurgents instead of giving those who surrendered a chance to live.[80]

Not even a month after he reconfirmed Lebao's leadership of the campaign, Jiaqing began to complain about Lebao's idleness and procrastination:

> It has been more than one year since Lebao left Guizhou for Sichuan to fight against the sectarian bandits, which cannot be considered a short period. He was commander-in-chief before and was appointed grand minister commander recently, so it is not that he has not been given sufficient authority. Nevertheless, his memorials do nothing other than detail battles. He has never laid down an overall plan or strategy. When he offers his opinion occasionally, it is always on the bandits' whereabouts and how he is chasing or pursuing them—he is always reactive to the bandits' actions but never has been on top of the situation with a winning plan.[81]

When the first deadline set by Jiaqing passed with the coming of summer, Jiaqing was overcome by pessimism, worrying that the campaign might not end before autumn, since the rebels might hide in the mountains to dodge the scorching heat of summer.[82] But he was comforted by Lebao's assurance that victory was near so that it was no longer necessary to send more reinforcements other than two thousand Yunnan troops already en route. Given that this was the first time Lebao had talked about the end of the war since his arrival in Sichuan, and he did not complain about the insufficiency of forces, the emperor took Lebao's remarks seriously. Saying that he was counting the days to the triumph, he turned down the offer by the Mongol rulers to join the campaign, suspended the office-selling campaign to raise funds, and declined donations by the salt merchants of Jiangsu.[83]

Throughout the summer, however, few battles occurred in Sichuan. Eldemboo did not achieve a new victory, and Delengtai paused after having followed Xu Tiande to Taiping, despite Jiaqing's displeasure.[84] Beneath the apparent quiet, however, some insurgents, especially Ran Wenchou's remnants, were regrouping. Starting from the early summer, Lebao's upbeat tone changed to an increasingly uncertain and pessimistic one. No longer giving promises, he talked more about obstacles. Fluctuating between hope and despair, Jiaqing could only offer more troops in addition to reprimanding Lebao verbally.[85] Unlike

earlier in the campaign, some commanders no longer desired reinforcements, since other means such as hiring militiamen locally were more beneficial. In fact, having too big a military force could be a liability; Lebao had been a talking point in the rumors about the war circulating among officials in Beijing, because Sichuan had more troops than other theaters but did not have breakthroughs.[86] Therefore, Lebao had initially declined the reinforcements and sent the bannermen of the Scouting Brigade and the Firearms Brigade back to Beijing.[87] However, when asked again by Jiaqing in the middle of the summer whether he needed reinforcements, Lebao chose to be oblique and underhanded. Although he complained that the total of seventy to eighty thousand Qing forces in the campaign was gravely insufficient and thought that another ten to twenty thousand troops were necessary, he did not ask for them, knowing that he would have no excuse not to finish the war if he received them. Instead, he argued against additional troops because there were no good generals available to lead them, new soldiers were not effective, and they were costly, while hinting that the triumph would not be achieved in one or two months even with reinforcements. Yet his not asking for reinforcements gave Jiaqing a dim hope. He agreed to extend the deadline to late summer with a possible extension of another few months to clear all rebel remnants.[88]

When the summer was nearing its end, two incidents prompted the emperor to take action against Lebao. First, Funing, the logistical tsar in Sichuan, shocked the throne with an exposé of operations and war finances in Sichuan in two memorials. Listing two dozen or so names of insurgent chiefs, including many new names, Funing reported that more rebel bands, each ranging from a thousand to more than ten thousand people, were emerging, and they were fiercer than ever, looting markets, attacking civilians' forts, and kidnaping people. More sensationally, Funing revealed that Lebao had requested from him 2.05 million taels of silver in sixteen months, and Delengtai had requested 535,000 taels in eleven months. Funing explained that he did not report Lebao earlier because the latter had been the commander-in-chief, who might have needed to have resources at hand for the unexpected, and that he could not resist demands from generals, for they would hold him responsible for impeding operations if he did not satisfy them. Praising Eldemboo as the only general who had been reasonable in financial matters, never making complaints, Funing stated that Eldemboo had also required 272,000 taels from him in less than a year.[89] Those were monstrous amounts of money, completely unproportional to the size of the military forces.

Apparently, Lebao had not been able to make friends with everybody. More important, Funing, not clean himself, was eager to

find scapegoats when he sensed the new emperor's determination to crack down on war-front corruption. Startled and infuriated by Funing's revelations, Jiaqing surmised that Lebao's repeated demurring at the offer of reinforcements was out of a desire to prolong the war so that he would continue to hold the position of commander-in-chief, thus devouring more money. Forwarding a copy of Funing's memorials to Lebao, Jiaqing ordered Lebao to clearly report back whether he could command the war, which was tantamount to an ultimatum.[90] Regarding war finances, the emperor was waiting for the findings of Guwanghing, a censor he had sent to Sichuan. A younger half-brother of Šulin but only in his late thirties, Guwanghing had served in the censorate system for several years. He was the first to expose Hešen's wrongdoings on the latter's arrest. Officially, his task was to escort 2.5 million taels of war funds to Sichuan—the first allotment of funds to Sichuan after Jiaqing took power—but he had another mission: to observe Funing's work for a short time.[91] Therefore, Jiaqing, expressing neither surprise nor anger, merely told Funing that the three commanders had claimed different amounts of funds because the sizes of their forces varied, and he did not think that there could be any fraud. Yet he praised Funing for his exposé and encouraged him to continue reporting on Lebao without fear.[92]

Days later, the throne was again alarmed after receiving Wesibu's report that over ten thousand rebels led by Xu Tiande and Li Shu (who might have joined Xu early in the summer in Daning) had broken into Hubei, threatening the county seat of Zhuxi, but Delengtai was not pursuing them. Although Hubei had frustrated numerous penetration attempts by the rebels on its northwestern border, this time it failed after the Xu-Li force had assaulted checkpoints for days. Not long after Hubei had enjoyed peace, it returned to a state of alert and mobilization. While allowing Wesibu to recruit new soldiers and hire more militiamen, Jiaqing ordered 3,000 Shanxi troops deployed to Hubei and sent 1,600 Zhili troops to Henan, as requested by Wu Xiongguang, the new governor of Henan.[93] Yet Jiaqing was most annoyed at not having heard from Lebao about the emergency.

One day after Wesibu's disquieting report on the Xu-Li force's invasion of Hubei reached the throne, three memorials by Lebao arrived. As usual, Lebao gave a tedious account of the operations in all theaters, but he did not mention the Hubei emergency at all, claiming that the insurgents did not dare to go to Hubei given the tenable defenses there and that Delengtai had chased Xu Tiande into the wild forests of Daning. In a relaxed mood, Lebao reported that he was heading from his headquarters at Baitaba to Dazhou to receive the newly arrived 2.5 million taels in war funds. Against Funing's criticism regarding grossly excessive expenditures, Lebao forcefully

fought back. He argued that all the expenditures were necessary and had been clearly recorded. He added that Eldemboo in fact had received money from him and that he had not claimed the enormous amount of funds only for himself. Admitting that Delengtai had been slow in fighting Xu Tiande, Lebao defended him as a better general than Mingliang and having no problem in financial matters, and he pleaded to keep Delengtai in his position given the dearth of good generals. Lebao accused Funing of being slanderous toward Delengtai because of discord between them.[94]

Not pleased by Lebao's aggressive self-defense, Jiaqing ridiculed his eagerness to rush to Dazhou to receive the money, while being ignorant of the emergency in Hubei. Calling Lebao "dreaming" and "shameless," Jiaqing could no longer contain his rage at Lebao and his regret about his trust of the man:

> Lebao has turned himself into a scribe, sitting comfortably in the logistical bureau and only taking care of the reports from all the routes. How can he be qualified to be the grand minister commander? He has also said that he pays close attention to all generals' contributions and mistakes, and he always makes state affairs the top priority. I cannot believe those claims. Lebao has not made any [workable] arrangements since taking the commandership. I am deeply ashamed of myself for not being able to judge people rightly and naming him grand minister commander. I must learn a lesson from this to avoid the same mistake in the future.[95]

No longer believing Lebao's claim that reinforcements were not necessary, Jiaqing deployed two thousand bannermen from Shengjing to Sichuan, the third deployment of bannermen from the north. He was also willing to pay expenses not endorsed by the logistical rules if the generals could end the conflict soon.[96] Yet he did not remove Lebao, because a piece of good news arrived the day after he penned the above severe criticism of Lebao: Zhu Shedou had nearly annihilated a rebel band north of Chongqing and had killed its chief, Bao Zhenghong. Blatantly taking this victory as his own, Lebao also reported that he had called on the coerced people to desert, which helped lessen the emperor's fury as well, for it showed that Lebao was now willing to use conciliatory measures, a departure from his emphasis on killing the rebels.[97]

But Lebao's downfall was postponed by only ten days. On 04/07/17, alarmed by the report from Wesibu that Xu Tiande's band of over twenty thousand was moving toward Xiangyang, Jiaqing dismissed Lebao from his positions of grand minister commander and Sichuan's governor-general, and made Mingliang the new commander-in-chief by appointing him grand minister commander and the vice commander-in-chief of the Manchu Red Banner. Again harshly

criticizing Lebao's failure in performing his duties, Jiaqing even mentioned the likelihood of executing Lebao in front of the armies if the situation in Hubei continued deteriorating. However, Jiaqing was not enthusiastic about Mingliang either, justifying his decision by citing the scarcity of able commanders. Meanwhile, he appointed Kuilun, the new minister of personnel, as governor-general of Sichuan, for Kuilun had impressed the emperor with his determination to reverse the course of the campaign.[98]

Two days after Jiaqing announced Lebao's dismissal, five memorials from Lebao arrived at the court, in which Lebao waged a fierce self-defense on all fronts from his decision not to ask for reinforcements to his huge expenditures. He rebutted Funing's accusation that more rebels had emerged, arguing that the total number of the insurgents had decreased but the number of their groups had increased, with fewer rebels in each band. He reiterated that he had not done anything inappropriate concerning expenditures and that he had shared the requested funds with other generals. To turn defense into offense, Lebao asked the throne to send someone to Sichuan to fill the position left by Jing'an, who had been escorted to Beijing for investigation. Most astonishingly, Lebao requested 5 million taels of war funds, even though he had received 2.5 million taels just weeks earlier. As he argued, the recently arrived funds had been used to pay debts, and he needed 3 million to pay for military expenditures and 2 million for local relief and to pay militiamen to guard all the forts in Sichuan. Finally, he submitted another list of his appointees to military vacancies in the battleground provinces for approval.[99]

Further enraged by Lebao's adamant response, Jiaqing issued a long and strongly worded edict and repudiated all Lebao's counterarguments, accusing him of being "extremely shameless" and "uttering only somniloquence." Jiaqing was most appalled that Lebao did not mention a word about the Hubei emergency but defended his arrangements in preventing the rebels from going to Hubei. To no less a degree, Jiaqing was offended by Lebao's request for another 5 million taels; he thought that Lebao was using local relief as a new excuse to cover up his misappropriation.[100] Not until he received the edict on his dismissal on 04/07/24 did Lebao lower the heat in his rhetoric. Yet he insisted that he had sent Delengtai to Hubei immediately after he received Wesibu's letter on the emergency, although he might not have done so until a few days before he wrote the memorial.[101] Lebao did not show great concern about the situation in Hubei, saying that Hubei should have sufficient forces when all the reinforcements arrived and that the insurgents routinely shuttled between Sichuan and Hubei. Again he defended his tactic of "tackling

the bandit bands one by one."[102]

Unlike other generals or the other commanders-in-chief before him, Lebao interacted with the throne in a remarkably intractable manner, openly challenging royal orders and opinions. By contrast, Jiaqing was often irresolute and prudent. Following his dismissal of Lebao, Jiaqing entrusted Kuilun with the investigation of Lebao on his handling of the Hubei emergency, his possible fraud in war finances, and his flipping back and forth on reinforcements. Even after the Hubei crisis abated, Jiaqing kept pressure on Kuilun to take the case seriously. However, it soon proved difficult to investigate Lebao on his own turf.

MINGLIANG'S FALL AND NAYANCHENG'S DEBUT AT THE WAR FRONT

At the time that Mingliang was given the scepter to commander the suppression campaign, he and Yongbao, the new governor of Shaanxi, had been in a tense struggle for some time. Not pleased to have to cooperate with Yongbao again, whereas his friend, Yimian, had been dismissed, Mingliang continued his procrastination in tackling Zhang Hanchao and his fewer than two thousand people, among whom only five or six hundred were able-bodied fighters. After its brief incursion into Henan, Zhang's band returned to Shaanxi and then shuttled back and forth between Shaanxi's border with Henan and its border with Gansu. At one point they penetrated Gansu's Chengxian, Huixian, and Liangdang but were soon forced back to Shaanxi by Guwangheo and Jilantai.[103] Meanwhile, several other rebel groups, including Fan Renjie's and Gao Junde's bands, roamed over the borders between Sichuan and Shaanxi, trying desperately to cross the Han River and merge with Zhang Hanchao. In the second month, a large group attacked a checkpoint in Ziyang and killed hundreds of troops, including a dozen officers.[104]

Early in the fourth month, Yongbao set out for Shaanxi. Lebao let Yongbao bring two thousand troops to Mingliang, because the latter had complained about a shortage of forces. Meanwhile, Lebao gave Yongbao the prerogative to maneuver all the troops in Shaanxi.[105] On arriving in Hanzhong, Yongbao rushed into the Qinling Mountains to fight Zhang Hanchao. In Huayang, Yongbao encountered Zhang but was badly beaten. Only thanks to Ma Zhaorui, a Green Standard officer, who charged Zhang's men, was the course of the battle reversed. Not until the following day did Mingliang arrive, joining Yongbao in a pincer attack against Zhang. When the two met at the seat of Liuba county after the battle, they quarreled bitterly: Yongbao accused Mingliang of not having come to his rescue sooner, and Mingliang blamed Yongbao for being defeated by the rebels.[106] The two acted separately after that. No longer daring to engage the rebels,

Yongbao stayed at Fengxian, claiming that he was to safeguard the passage of war funds to Sichuan via the plank trail in western Shaanxi and to help supply Mingliang's army. In their joint memorial, Mingliang and Yongbao painted a pessimistic picture, stressing the difficulties in battling Zhang in the mountains.[107] Convinced that more forces were necessary, Jiaqing sent Qingcheng, the new Chengdu general, to bring eight hundred troops to their aid. First told to help Mingliang, Qingcheng was redirected by the emperor to join Yongbao when he arrived in Shaanxi in the summer.[108]

In the fifth month, Zhang Hanchao made another sortie to Henan in two groups, one infiltrating into Xiping, the other penetrating Lushi. Both Wu Xiongguang and Mingliang hurried there and forced the rebels back to Shaanxi.[109] After this, Mingliang virtually halted operations other than sending militias to contain Zhang within Shaanxi, given Jiaqing's repeated warnings of severe punishment if Zhang were to cross the provincial border. He even let pass more than one chance to wipe out Zhang's band.[110] To justify his delays, Mingliang complained that his force was too small and the newly arrived reinforcements useless; he suggested that troops be stationed at each pass in the mountains, which would take both time and more reinforcements to implement. Clearly aware that neither Mingliang nor Yongbao was fighting wholeheartedly, Jiaqing continued to criticize them and to ridicule them for not catching the injured Zhang and rounding up his two thousand people with their thirteen thousand troops.[111]

When Zhang Hanchao again turned westward in the middle of the summer, Yongbao and Qingcheng engaged him before he reached the plank trail in western Shaanxi, but they complained to the emperor that Mingliang had not pursued Zhang. After Mingliang showed up with Xingzhao, the Jingzhou general who had been with Mingliang since the summer of 1798, the four reached an agreement: Mingliang and Xingzhao would go to Shangzhou ahead of the insurgents in order to stop them from going to Henan, while Yongbao and Qingcheng marched from northwest to southeast in the Qinling Mountains to prevent them from approaching the plank trail again. They assigned Fucheng, the dismissed Chengdu general, to lead two thousand troops to pursue Zhang's band closely. However, this pact did not ensure their cooperation. Nor did the emperor's repeated exhortations and warnings.[112] Instead, Mingliang and Yongbao stepped up their backbiting. To have evidence in his favor, Yongbao archived all their correspondence and even sent an agent to spy on Mingliang, while moving slowly and at times pausing for days.[113] At the end of the summer, Zhang Hanchao tried to reach Hubei's Yunxi but was driven back to Shaanxi by Mingliang, who had rushed there. Then Mingliang

reported to the throne that Yongbao and Qingcheng were nowhere to be seen, which prompted Jiaqing to order Songyun to conduct an investigation of the strife between Yongbao and Mingliang.[114] In the following two weeks, both sides submitted memorials accusing each other of failing in his duty. While castigating both for their scandalous conduct, Jiaqing was more inclined to trust Mingliang, whom he had just named grand minister commander; he suspected that Yongbao and Qingcheng were jealous of Mingliang's near victory over Zhang. He rescinded an earlier decision to send Mingliang to Hubei and have Yongbao and Qingcheng finish off Zhang's group. Then he instructed Mingliang to report truthfully on everyone's performance, cautioning Mingliang not to leave Shaanxi if Yongbao and Qingcheng were not reliable.[115]

Nevertheless, the emperor changed his mind about Mingliang in a matter of days. On his return from Sichuan in the mid-eighth month, Guwanghing told Jiaqing that Mingliang had purposefully delayed his actions because he was unwilling to go to Sichuan once Zhang Hanchao was dealt with—Mingliang considered it shameful to be directed by Lebao, the son of his old colleague Wenfu.[116] Soon after, Jiaqing learned that Mingliang was among the generals who had accepted bribes from Hu Qilun, the logistical boss in Hubei under investigation for misappropriating war funds. Appalled, Jiaqing asked Kuilun and Wu Xiongguang to find out more about the misconduct of Yongbao, Mingliang, and Qingcheng, and to report to him in secret.[117] On 04/08/17, one month after he had appointed Mingliang grand minister commander, Jiaqing dismissed Mingliang and gave the position to Eldemboo. Having long held a high opinion of Eldemboo, Jiaqing was further convinced of his high character when Guwanghing reported that Eldemboo had not received bribes from Hu Qilun. In conferring the commandership on him, Jiaqing again praised Eldemboo for his self-discipline and professionalism, and permitted him to submit his memorials in Manchu since he was illiterate in Chinese.[118] Being the sixth commander-in-chief, Eldemboo would remain in this position until 1803, one year before the end of the long war.

Before Mingliang received word of his dismissal, his strife with Yongbao had reached the tipping point. In the eighth month, Zhang Hanchao headed in the direction of Xi'an from Shangzhou after having failed to recruit new rebels in Shangzhou and Henan's Xichuan, both sectarian anchorages.[119] Despite their promise to participate in a pincer attack, Yongbao and Qingcheng stood still for more than three weeks and sent only Fucheng and Ma Zhaorui to lead troops to chase Zhang's small detachments. When Mingliang and Xingzhao engaged Zhang at Zhen'an, none of Yongbao's men came to their aid. The

enraged Mingliang accused Yongbao and Qingcheng of failing to perform their duty when captured rebels revealed that no Qing force had pursued them. When Mingliang's memorial reached the throne, a memorial by Yongbao and Qingcheng also arrived, explaining that they were delayed by constant heavy rain and other factors, which only confirmed Mingliang's accusation.[120]

Songyun had begun investigating their conflict by this time. Although Songyun tried to be impartial, he favored Mingliang over Yongbao—he thought that Yongbao was incompetent, selfish, and petty: not only could he not lead the war; he was no good as a civil official either. But Jiaqing pressed him to be more articulate and firm.[121] At the court in Beijing, the consensus was also in favor of Mingliang (Yongbao's poor reputation aside, Lebao's recent dismissal might have helped sway the opinion). On 04/08/23, Jiaqing dismissed both Yongbao and Qingcheng—the second time in the campaign for Yongbao, who never returned to the campaign. Although Mingliang was spared, Jiaqing appointed Nayancheng, the political upstart, as imperial commissioner (*qinchai dachen*) to supervise Mingliang in finishing off Zhang Hanchao.[122]

For Mingliang, it would be more embarrassing to be supervised by Nayancheng than by Lebao, because Nayancheng, more than thirty years his junior, was the grandson of Agūi, who had been Mingliang's colleague as well. Jiaqing might have hoped that Nayancheng's arrival would spur Mingliang to accelerate the fight against Zhang to avoid being placed under Nayancheng's direction. Shortly after, when Songyun finally sent in his suggestion to dismiss Yongbao, Qingcheng, and Mingliang, and send all three to the capital for trial (he did not know of the royal decisions when he wrote his memorial), the emperor dropped Mingliang's name and stressed that Mingliang would be given credit if he could wipe Zhang out before Nayancheng arrived.[123]

Yet there was more to Nayancheng's mission. Unlike many other youngsters of Manchu noble families who purchased a degree to decorate their resumes, Nayancheng had earned his *jinshi* degree at the age of twenty-five. Then he spent a couple of years at the Hanlin Academy before he was appointed, in 1792, to serve at the Imperial Study (Nanshufang), the privy advisory body of the emperor. After Agūi's death in late 1797, Nayancheng was placed on the Grand Council as a junior member (*xingzou*), assisting Hešen in handling correspondence regarding the White Lotus campaign. He was among those to be commended by Qianlong after Wang Sanhuai's capture.[124] However, in the wake of Hešen's purge, Nayancheng experienced a meteoric rise. Jiaqing appointed him to numerous important positions in the central government, which placed the thirty-five-year-old in a

position parallel to that of the fallen Hešen. Nayancheng came to be in charge of the Hanlin Academy, the ministries of Revenue, Works, and War, the Institute of Historiography, the editorial committee of the imperial "veritable records," internal customs and octroi in the capital city, the palace maintenance office, and the Imperial Household Department,[125] and he was named commander-in-chief or vice commander-in-chief for several banners.[126] Unlike Hešen, who did not collect all his concurrent positions until several years after his career took off in 1776, Nayancheng was showered with titles in merely seven months. Even Nayancheng's mediocre uncle, Adisi, was appointed first vice minister of war and then Chengdu general when Qingcheng was dismissed.[127] Before Nayancheng's departure for Shaanxi, Jiaqing granted Nayancheng's mother an honorable title to commend her parenting Nayancheng alone after her husband, Asida, passed away in 1767, when Nayancheng was only three years old.[128]

As Jiaqing later admitted, he intended to foster Nayancheng toward becoming a leading courtier. In other words, Jiaqing planned to fill the void left by Hešen with Nayancheng. Apparently, it was not Jiaqing's intention at this point to alter his father's practice of relying on a single chief grand councilor in the handling of critical state affairs. As Qianlong had sent all his chief grand councilors, Necin, Fuheng, and Hešen, to supervise at least one war, Jiaqing might have thought that it was desirable for Nayancheng to undergo a war-front internship as well.[129] By invoking Necin's death when he ordered Hešen to commit suicide, Jiaqing expressed the hope that Nayancheng would become another Fuheng, bringing an end to the ongoing campaign against the White Lotus rebels, while battleground experience would qualify Nayancheng to become the Grand Council's new number one. Before Nayancheng's departure, Jiaqing especially instructed him to join in the operations, either together with Mingliang or leading an army himself, and warned him not to model himself on Lebao, staying in a safe place and compiling reports on others' battles.[130]

Nayancheng set out for Shaanxi at the beginning of the ninth month. Along with him was Taibu, a Mongol bannerman and the new governor of Shaanxi.[131] On their way to Shaanxi, the two interviewed local officials, soldiers and their families, and even servants and valets to try to find out the reasons for the slow progress in the Shaanxi theater. They concluded that the generals had not been committed to fighting the insurgents, staying far from the enemy, pursuing slowly, and not lending a helping hand to their colleagues when needed, whereas the soldiers were exhausted and inadequately supplied. They also reported a rumor that the Qing forces had not engaged Zhang Hanchao at all between the fourth and the seventh months, which

meant that Mingliang and Yongbao might have falsified battles in their reports. Nayancheng demanded to be bestowed the prerogative to give capital punishment before royal endorsement to any general on site if serious misconduct was confirmed. He argued that the request was not prompted by youthful enthusiasm or intractability but was for the sake of rooting out the entrenched war-front malpractice. He also requested more bannermen from Manchuria equipped with three horses each to move faster and be less dependent on the logistical services. In fact, he had already ordered Bolin, Shanxi's governor, to prepare one thousand horses.[132]

Jiaqing was not impressed with Nayancheng's pretentiousness; he bluntly rejected both of his requests. He told Nayancheng that one should not take officials' lives lightly and that even grand minister commanders had never had the prerogative to execute officials in war, let alone an imperial commissioner. Although he agreed that it was a serious felony if the military in Shaanxi had not fought for months, he enjoined Nayancheng to make certain first whether it was true. As for reinforcements and horses, Jiaqing insisted that the forces in Shaanxi were sufficient, given that three thousand bannermen from Shengjing and Jilin and one thousand Salar soldiers had been sent there.[133] Despite his continued trust in Nayancheng, this exchange left the emperor concerned about his protégé's mission.

After he was relieved of the campaign's commandership, Mingliang became more aggressive in his feud with Yongbao, exposing more of his rival's wrongdoings in several memorials. In his own defense, Mingliang called on his rapport with Agūi, saying that he had always modeled himself on Agūi, following his instructions of yore.[134] While criticizing Mingliang for his use of Agūi to shield himself, Jiaqing tried to take advantage of it as well. He told Mingliang that he could redeem his "crimes" if he successfully assisted Nayancheng in his first military mission and warned Mingliang not to take Nayancheng lightly because he was Agūi's grandson or to be jealous of him. Meanwhile, Jiaqing made the coming winter the new deadline to clear Shaanxi and Sichuan of all the rebels.[135]

But Mingliang was not willing to mentor Nayancheng. He instead sped up his fight with Zhang Hanchao, who again headed to Gansu. On 04/09/05, Zhang entered Gansu's Liangdang. Aided by Hengšui and Guwangheo, now Gansu's provincial administrative commissioner who had again deployed the Salar soldiers, Mingliang and Xingzhao inflicted a series of defeats on Zhang in Chengxian, driving many insurgents to commit suicide by hanging, and then encircled the band's remnants on a large mountain, Sanjianshan, promising to capture Zhang and his last men in days. Nevertheless, on 04/09/13, Zhang managed to escape by evading the Qing forces several times

and climbed down the ivy-covered cliff on the only open side. Via Qinzhou, he and his men returned to Shaanxi and the Qinling Mountains.[136]

Greatly encouraged by Mingliang's progress, Jiaqing was ready to give Nayancheng another assignment. Nevertheless, the arrival of several memorials from Yongbao again incited his fury against Mingliang. Yongbao reported that Mingliang had written to him several times and asked him not to move when Mingliang was fighting Zhang at Zhen'an in the eighth month but then accused Yongbao of cowardliness and failure in his duty. Yongbao's exposé made Jiaqing suspect that Mingliang had deliberately entrapped Yongbao.[137] Compounded with the news of Zhang's escape in Gansu, this caused Jiaqing to order an investigation of Mingliang, Xingzhao, and Hengšui and to deprive Mingliang of his remaining position of grand minister consultant. Despite his severe reprimand of the three, Jiaqing promised not to put them on trial if they captured Zhang when this edict reached them; otherwise Nayancheng and Songyun would arrest them.[138]

Under pressure and trying not to arouse the contempt of Nayancheng, who was on his way to the Qinling Mountains from Xi'an, Mingliang again displayed his efficacy. He first fought Zhang in Wulang and Jiangkou, the heart of the Qinling Mountains, and then divided his men into smaller groups and followed Zhang's group into the dense forests. On 04/10/03, the Qing troops caught Zhang's group. After losing more than two hundred of his men including Li Chao, one of Zhang's deputies, Zhang Hanchao, who was hit by a spear, jumped from a cliff and then hanged himself on a tree, though hundreds of his followers were still at large.[139] Buoyed by Zhang's death, Mingliang made a last pitch in his defense. He contended that he was not greedy financially and that he and Eldemboo were the two generals whom the rebels feared most, but real cowards were jealous of him and tried to frame him. He also vowed to spare no effort to fight under Nayancheng.[140] However, before the news of Zhang's death reached the court, Nayancheng and Taibu's report on their interrogation of Yongbao had arrived. Jiaqing was hugely disturbed by what Yongbao had revealed—that Mingliang had exaggerated his victories and, much worse, fabricated battles that had not been fought in his memorials—even though Nayancheng cautioned the emperor that Yongbao's allegations were one-sided, and his witnesses had acted on Yongbao's instruction.[141]

Having finally decided to relinquish Mingliang, Jiaqing was not even swayed by the news of Zhang Hanchao's death. Suspecting that Mingliang was not involved in the battle that led to Zhang's death, he granted no reward to him and Xingzhao.[142] Although Jiaqing was

pleased with his own scheme of using Nayancheng to motivate Mingliang, Nayancheng was sympathetic to Mingliang. Having spoken on Mingliang's behalf when he was in the capital, Nayancheng made another plea, following Zhang's death, to keep him at the front. But Jiaqing was adamant, claiming that Mingliang was "sophisticatedly treacherous" (*canghua*) and might not treat Nayancheng with respect.[143] Consequently, Nayancheng and Taibu dismissed Mingliang and Xingzhao, and sent them to Songyun for interrogation. Based on Songyun's investigations and suggestions, Yongbao and Mingliang received the punishment of imprisonment awaiting execution; Qingcheng and Xingzhao were to be exiled to Xinjiang.[144]

With Mingliang removed, Jiaqing completed his revamping of the campaign's leadership; all but one major leader from the onset of the war had been replaced (Table 3.1). The only one who remained was Hengšui, the Xi'an general and Nayancheng's father-in-law (Eldemboo and Delengtai were retained, but they had not joined the war until the spring of 1797). Having been censured for Zhang Hanchao's escape in Gansu, Hengšui was exculpated after Zhang's death and ordered to team up with Nayancheng in clearing up Zhang's remnants, thus replacing Mingliang as mentor to Nayancheng in his war-front apprenticeship. In defending his sweeping changes to the war leadership, Jiaqing argued that he had no intention to place his own protégés in leading positions but picked appointees by their quality—they must be upright and conscientious. By any measure, despite his vacillation and missteps, the Jiaqing emperor had indeed done his utmost during his first year of rulership to try to reverse the tide in the suppression campaign to favor the Qing.[145]

AN ARRESTED RECTIFICATION IN WAR FINANCE

With a nearly complete overhaul of the war leadership came the high points in Jiaqing's endeavors to curb war expenditures and crack down on, if not root out, war-front corruption. By the beginning of 1799, the suppression campaign had cost the Qing state over 70 million taels of silver, according to Jiaqing, which made the war the most expensive one in Qing history and left the central government in deficit. Greatly disturbed and apparently better informed than his father about the abuses and embezzlement of war funds at the front, Jiaqing had made it one of his priorities to correct the wrongs in war finance. Meanwhile, he vowed not to increase taxes for the campaign.[146] This battle was bound to be difficult, however.

TABLE 3.1: Major Personnel Changes in the War Zone, 1796–1799

Fuling, 1796–1797	
Huiling, 1797	
Yimian, 1797–1798	
Lebao, 1798–1799	
Mingliang, 1799	
Eldemboo, 1799–1803	
Governor, 1795–1797	Huguang
Jing'an, 1798–1799	
Wesibu, 1799–1800	
Governor, 1795–1796	Sichuan
Ingšan, 1797	
Yimian, 1797–1798	
Lebao, 1798–1799	
Kuilun,1799–1800	
Governor, 1795–1796	Shaan-Gan
Songyun, 1799–1800	
Governor, 1796–1798	Hubei
G'aoki, 1798–1800	
Governor, 1789–1799,	Shandong
Yongbao, 1799,	
Taibu, 1799–1800	
Governor, 1795–1798	Henan
Wesibu, 1798–1799	
Wu Xiongguang, 1799–1801	
Governor, 1793–1798	Guangdong
Fucheng, 1798–1799	
Qingcheng, 1799	
Adisi, 1799–1800	
Governor, 1795–1801	Guangxi
Xingzhao, 1798–1799	
Hongfeng, 1799–1802	

Source: Information from GZDJQ, *XFFL*, *QSLJQ*, and Wei Xiumei, *Qingji zhiguanbiao*, 362, 365, 371, 399, 423, 430, 655, 664, 667.

Dazhou at the Epicenter

Since Sichuan had come to claim more funds than other battleground provinces since 1797, Jiaqing set his hand first to sorting out Sichuan's logistical services. Up to this point, Sichuan's main logistical office (Junxu Zongju) had been at the seat of Dazhou subprefecture. At the beginning of 1797, Ingšan came to head the office when Yimian replaced him as Sichuan's acting governor-general.[147] In early 1798, Funing was sent to Dazhou from Hubei. Although this was meant as punishment for his dismal campaign in Hubei, Funing was entrusted to colead, with Ingšan, the logistical office in Dazhou. Just weeks after taking the reins of government, Jiaqing, having long heard rumors of problems in Sichuan's logistics, replaced Ingšan with Minghing, Mingliang's elder brother and a regional commander. Minghing was subsequently promoted to become the Chengdu banner garrison's vice

commander-in-chief, which was meant to give him more authority vis-à-vis Funing.[148] This move stirred up apprehension in Dazhou; Funing was edgy. Soon after Minghing's appointment, Funing sent a memorial to explain the high expenditures in Sichuan. He said:

> I consulted Huiling, Eldemboo, and Delengtai [on the expenditures] when they passed through Dazhou, one after the other. They all said that the expenses had greatly decreased lately, but there were still things that were not in total accordance with the statutes. In view of the fact that the Solon, Jilin, and Green Standard troops led by those generals are all gallant in fighting and that this is a critical moment in the operations against the bandits, [I] have to make exceptions and be flexible when it comes to cases that the statutes do not endorse.[149]

But his oblique self-defense only aroused more suspicions on the part of the emperor. Jiaqing rebuked Funing by pointing out that, while the expenses increased day by day in Sichuan, soldiers there often did not receive their stipends and supplies on time, and, when commanders demanded funds from the logistical officials at will, nobody dared to check on their usage.[150] Given Funing's reputation for being corrupt and greedy (he had earned the nickname Fu Siyao, or "Pitiless Extortioner Fu," while he was the governor-general of Huguang),[151] Jiaqing could not help but infer that problems in Sichuan's logistical administration were numerous and serious. Two weeks later, at the end of the second month, Jiaqing decided to send Guwanghing to Sichuan, as mentioned above. Suspecting that there were also problems in Shaanxi's logistical services, Jiaqing changed Songyun's appointment to governor-general of Shaan-Gan. Still on his way from Lhasa to Beijing, Songyun thus headed to Shaanxi instead.[152]

Guwanghing did not arrive in Dazhou until late in the sixth month, because Jiaqing made a change to his itinerary, having him escort the second shipment of funds rather than the first.[153] Before Guwanghing's arrival, Jiaqing sent Minghing away in the mid-third month, deeming him not the right person for the job. Succeeding Minghing was none other than Jing'an, the newly dismissed governor-general of Huguang.[154] Jing'an's tenure in Sichuan was extremely brief. No sooner did he arrive in Dazhou than he was cashiered on 04/04/21 because of the new accusations against him, as mentioned above.[155] Although there is little record of Jing'an's short stay in Sichuan, Funing had become alarmed by all the personnel changes around him. He made more attempts at self-defense, including the two memorials he submitted in the summer pointing his finger at Lebao, which helped take down Lebao. Nevertheless, the more Funing tried to clear himself, the deeper Jiaqing's suspicions became. Despite his use of Funing's accusations against Lebao, Jiaqing did not trust the accuser

either. When Kuilun was appointed as Sichuan's new governor-general, Jiaqing instructed him to examine Funing's financial records thoroughly for possible fraud, misappropriation, and bribery of the commanders.[156]

The Hu Qilun Scandal

Whereas Jiaqing was only suspicious about war finances in Sichuan and Shaanxi, he had a case in hand from Hubei: Hu Qilun, the head of the logistical office in Xiangyang, had been charged with fraud and misappropriating war funds. A native of Shaoxing, Zhejiang, Hu Qilun was the Xiangyang prefect when the rebellion started. Having been recruited by Bi Yuan to take charge of logistics in northern Hubei, Hu had dealt out 4.2 million taels of silver in two and a half years. However, his logistical bureau consisted of only himself and one aide, Zhu Mo, also from Zhejiang and a disciple of Hu's brother. All the funds had been stored in Hu's yamen. In 1796–1797, when northern Hubei was one of the major battlegrounds and troops converged there, Hu Qilun had frequently sent gratuities to the commanders, including Yongbao and Mingliang. Hu's good will paid off; the generals in turn warmly praised Hu and requested promotions and awards for him, which earned him colored feathers.[157] At the end of 1798, Jing'an, in his capacity as governor-general of Huguang, accused both Hu and Zhu of fraud and misappropriation of war funds, and ordered a search of their homes. As 50,000 taels were found in Hu's home, both were dismissed and investigated.[158] However, the case soon fell into abeyance, and then Jing'an himself was censured in the wake of Hešen's fall.

In the second month of 1799, Jiaqing revisited this case. He was irked by the investigation in Hubei, where Hu was left to tally the accounts and receipts by himself, and nobody had been assigned to oversee him. Suspecting that Zu Zhiwang, the provincial administrative commissioner who had led the case after Jing'an's dismissal, had tried to protect Hu, Jiaqing ordered both Hu Qilun and Zhu Mo escorted to Beijing and a thorough examination of Hu's property.[159] However, the interrogation did not yield much when the two arrived in Beijing in early summer. Not until Zu Zhiwang came to Beijing and met with the emperor on 04/08/16 did Jiaqing find out the reason. Because Hu Qilun had kept detailed records of his gifts, mostly silver (occasionally luxurious textiles and clothes), to the major commanders in northern Hubei in 1796–1797—including how much, in what form (such as in bullion or in plate), to whom, when, and who delivered them—Wesibu, Jing'an's successor, did not submit this account book to the central government after he had received it from Zu Zhiwang, as it implicated many high-ranking officials (Table

3.2).[160] Only after the account book was transferred to Hu's interrogators in Beijing did Hu give up his resistance. He admitted that he had misappropriated over 80,000 taels by retaining 8 to 10 percent of the funds that he distributed and that he had, together with Bi Yuan, sent monies to the commanders in Hubei. However, he might have embezzled more than that.[161]

Hu's records and confession shocked the throne and officialdom. All the leading commanders in northern Hubei were at fault, some of whom received illicit gifts as frequently as every two weeks. Contrary to his public persona as a scholastic mandarin, Bi Yuan, who had died of illness in the summer of 1797, figured large in the scandal. Bi received more than 45,000 taels from Hu, the largest of sum of all, for which the usage was not recorded. In addition, Bi often delivered Hu's gifts to the generals himself. More alarmingly, when Yongbao was dismissed and escorted to Beijing for trial at the end of 1796, Bi told Hu to give him 2,000 taels. Because Yongbao did not take the money with him when he was escorted away, Bi had the sum, to which Hu Qilun added another 6,000 taels, delivered to Beijing. Having received 8,000 taels while in jail, Yongbao purchased a house in Beijing with 3,000 taels.[162]

TABLE 3.2: Hu Qilun's Illicit Gifts in Silver to War Leaders in Hubei, 1796–1797

RECEIVER	TOTAL AMOUNT	TIME SPAN	TIMES	NOTE
Yongbao	26,410 taels	01/01/19–01/12/26	At least 17 times	Also 280 silver plates, weight unknown
Bi Yuan	45,724 taels	Only one time recorded: 01/12/25	Unknown	11,000 taels received together with Dhuling
Ohai	5,660 taels	01/03/24–01/08/20	18 times	Also 350 silver plates, weight unknown
Qingcheng	3,950 taels	01/05/24–01/12/06	8 times	Plus 15,449 taels for military uniforms
Dhuling	10,657 taels	02/02/13	1 time	For awarding troops
Mingliang	8,341 taels	01/05/03–02/02/21	8 times	
Hengsai	860 taels	01/05/03–01/10/20	11 times	Also 200 silver plates, weight unknown
	Total: 99,602 taels			

Source: QSSLAD 30.

On the same day that Jiaqing learned about Hu Qilun's account book, he held an audience with Guwanghing, who had just returned from Sichuan. An observant censor, Guwanghing had collected critical information both en route and in Dazhou, even though Lebao sent him back right after he delivered the funds. As mentioned above, he had informed the emperor of Mingliang's feud with Yongbao, Mingliang's unwillingness to go to Sichuan under Lebao's supervision, and Eldemboo's good reputation, which prompted Jiaqing to replace Mingliang with Eldemboo as commander-in-chief. With respect to war finances, Guwanghing revealed that, despite the high expenditures, many soldiers had not received their stipends for months and they

were poorly equipped, which corroborated what had been reported by Songyun earlier: troops in Shaanxi were not adequately supplied—some had no shoes but used ox hides to wrap their feet.[163] In addition, it is possible that Guwanghing also revealed the truth behind Wang Sanhuai's capture—Wang surrendered to Lebao but was not captured in battle as Lebao had claimed.

At the same time, another memorial from Kuilun, who was still on his way to Sichuan, arrived at the court.[164] After he entered Shaanxi, Kuilun had heard more about the problems in Sichuan's logistics: the logistical officials and clerks in Sichuan had siphoned off war funds to fish for promotions and favors from their superiors or simply to line their own pockets, while the troops did not receive their pay and rewards in a timely manner. However, this time Kuilun focused on Lebao. He blamed Lebao for having set a bad example, citing how Lebao used to curry favor with Hešen when he was governor-general of Shaan-Gan and during the Miao campaign. Kuilun also criticized Lebao for having no winning strategy and not being able to command his subordinates, perhaps alluding to Mingliang's dissension with Lebao. He also pointed out that the emperor's conciliatory policy toward the followers of the rebellion did not achieve much, owing to the lingering memory of Lebao's deceit of Wang Sanhuai the previous year. Poised for a thorough housecleaning, Kuilun requested officials from the capital to assist in his investigations of Lebao and Funing. Moreover, he requested 2.6 million taels of war funds, because Lebao had spent most of the 2.5 taels that had recently arrived in Sichuan to pay debts and for other purposes.[165]

The confluence of all those exposés in a matter of days bolstered Jiaqing's resolve for reform. On 04/08/17, he authored a series of measures. He replaced Mingliang with Eldemboo. He ordered a search of the homes of Yongbao, Qingcheng, and Ohūi, who had taken bribes from Hu Qilun, and that their property be confiscated. He refrained from doing the same to Mingliang and Hengšui because both were still fighting on the frontlines, although he enjoined Kuilun to find out whether Mingliang had committed other financial wrongdoings. Clearly and firmly, Jiaqing stated that he was determined to thoroughly probe any frauds and misappropriations in Sichuan. As Jiaqing reasoned, if logistics in northern Hubei had turned out to be so fraudulent, there ought to be more serious problems in Sichuan, given the much greater scale of the logistics and that both Funing and Ingšan were higher in rank than Hu Qilun, let alone Funing's notorious record of being corrupt and one of the cronies of Hešen. Once again, Jiaqing attributed the slow progress of the campaign to the financial malpractice so prevalent at the front: the commanders delayed completing the campaign to avoid the auditing through which

their abuses and misappropriation of funds would be brought to light.[166]

On the same day, Jiaqing allocated 500,000 taels from the treasury of the Ministry of Revenue to Sichuan. He sent Guwanghing and another Manchu bannerman, Tojin, to escort the funds. This time Guwanghing would stay in Dazhou to lead the logistical office, which answered Kuilun's request for personnel from Beijing. But Tojin served as the royal informant—he would return to Beijing on the delivery of the funds. To assist Guwanghing, Jiaqing also ordered Liu Qing, the popular local official who had persuaded Wang Sanhuai to surrender, to join Dazhou's logistical office. Although Jiaqing reduced Kuilun's request of 2.6 million to 500,000 taels, he had already made an arrangement. Earlier in the month, Jiaqing had sent 1.5 million taels to Shaanxi in the trust of Songyun for Sichuan's needs, since he did not trust Funing. Then he instructed Songyun to send the funds to Sichuan. Thus, the new financial management in Sichuan would have 2 million taels to operate with, which would comply with the new regulations.[167]

Hong Liangji's Challenge

One week after Jiaqing sounded the clarion call to crack down on war-front corruption, on 04/08/25, Yongxing, Jiaqing's younger brother, forwarded to the emperor a long letter written by Hong Liangji, a fifty-three-year-old scholar-official. Although he did not become a *jinshi* until 1790 after numerous failures in the highest examinations, Hong was no stranger to officialdom. He had served on the staff of several high-ranking officials, including Bi Yuan, for many years and was known to the circle of notables in the capital city. In the first half of 1799, Hong, in his capacity as a member of the Hanlin Academy, had been on the editorial committee to compile the late Qianlong emperor's chronology, the "Veritable Records," but he resigned shortly before he sent out several copies of his letter to dignitaries in the capital.[168] In the letter, Hong set forth poignant and explosive criticism of Jiaqing's leniency toward Hešen's protégés and his vacillation with respect to the half-hearted generals in the White Lotus campaign. Perhaps, his recent work on Qianlong's records had refreshed and deepened his appreciation of the deceased monarch so much that Hong contrasted Jiaqing's alleged indetermination to Qianlong's resoluteness in penalizing unqualified officials and generals.[169]

In fact, Hong had stunned officialdom the previous year, 1798, when he blamed local officials for the eruption of the rebellion and criticized the execution of the suppression campaign in a special examination for the members of the Hanlin Academy.[170]

Conspicuously moralistic and self-righteous, Hong was nevertheless standing by a Legalistic line on both occasions, advocating severe punishment for all wicked officials to realign the government's authority. Although Hong rightly perceived that the campaign had derailed, as many others inside and outside of officialdom had noted, his grasp of the suppression war was limited in both scope and depth. Having no access to official correspondence between the commanders and the central government, Hong relied on chitchat, rumors, official newsletters, and interviews with people who had recently returned from the war zone but were not at the core of the commandership. Apparently, Hong did not keep track of the most recent moves that Jiaqing had made in rectifying the campaign. He had no knowledge of Hu Qilun's case, which implicated his old patron, Bi Yuan; nor did he know of Lebao's dismissal, let alone the probes of war finances in Dazhou.

Jiaqing was duly offended by Hong Liangji's blunt and tactless criticism in the middle of his reform thrust. Jiaqing methodically defended his disposal of the Hešen case and the guilty leaders of the White Lotus War and declared Hong's accusations groundless. Hong was immediately arrested. Two days later, the Grand Council and the Ministry of Punishment sentenced him to death, but Jiaqing commuted the sentence to exile in Ili. Unsettled by Hong's strident criticism, Jiaqing might yet have appreciated Hong's eagerness for reform and taken note of some of his allegations. Indeed, he did not withdraw his call for suggestions and criticism but reassured officialdom that he still welcomed them. Although ordering all other copies of Hong's letter destroyed, he kept one at hand.[171]

Kuilun the Incorruptible

As Hong Liangji was locked behind bars for his outspokenness, Kuilun, the new governor-general of Sichuan and an outspoken ranking Manchu official, was nearing Sichuan, the province from which he had launched his career. In 1777, Kuilun had received his first post outside of Beijing as a Green Standard officer in Sichuan's Songpan, formerly part of Tibet's Kham area. After having served in several different Green Standard posts in Sichuan, Kuilun was appointed in 1788 by the Qianlong emperor as the Fuzhou general, the highest banner position in Fujian.[172] This appointment was a great jump for the thirty-six-year-old, who had been merely the regional commander in Sichuan's Jianchang command and had not served in any major position within the banner system. Admitting that Kuilun was underqualified, Qianlong cited Kuilun's family background: his grandfather, Cabina, minister of war, was killed during the Zunghar campaign in 1731. But Qianlong quickly added that Kuilun himself seemed to be bright.[173] In

Fuzhou, one of Kuilun's duties was to take charge of Fujian's sea customs, a potentially lucrative job. In 1795, his otherwise uneventful tenure in Fuzhou took a dramatic turn when Kuilun accused his two colleagues, Wula'na, the governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang, and Pu Lin, Fujian's governor, of covering up shortages in the local granaries and treasuries, which unfolded into one of the most sensational corruption cases in the late Qianlong reign. Not only were both Wula'na and Pu Lin given the death penalty after having been convicted of graft, but many lesser officials in Fujian were also implicated and penalized, including ten more executions.[174] Because Wula'na was not only a member of the imperial Aisin Gioro clan but also a relative of Hešen by marriage, Kuilun gained soaring fame for being upright and courageous. He was soon named governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang.[175]

After Hešen's fall, Jiaqing appointed Kuilun to head the Ministry of Personnel, which was but one of several moves Jiaqing made to place people of integrity in critical positions. To the emperor's great surprise, Kuilun's leaving of his post in Fuzhou incurred a personal difficulty for him. Since sea customs in Fujian had failed to yield levies comparable to earlier years (Kuilun explained that piracy had caused a decline in cargoes to Fujian), Kuilun was required to make up the shortage of 194,000 taels from his own pocket. Having paid only 8,000 taels by then, Kuilun proposed mortgaging his several houses and paying the rest from his "silver to nourish virtue" allowance. Marveling at Kuilun's humble property holding after having been in charge of sea customs for years—in contrast to Wula'na, who had more than 400,000 taels at his home when arrested, and Pu Lin, who had more than 280,000 taels at his home—Jiaqing loudly praised Kuilun for his cleanness, saying that even his enemies in Fujian could not find any excuse to attack him.[176] Kuilun had also impressed the emperor with his confidence in quickly concluding the campaign, which was no less important in Jiaqing's choosing him to replace Lebao.

A relentless new boss, Kuilun did not hesitate to exercise his power. When he entered Sichuan at Guangyuan, he dismissed You Hanyu, a brigade commander (*youji*) who had never performed his assigned task of guarding a checkpoint but stayed behind the city walls in Guangyuan.[177] On his arrival in Dazhou on 04/09/09, Kuilun immediately dismissed and arrested Lebao.[178] Good at painting on fans but having no war experience besides hunting for Guolu bandits in Sichuan more than a dozen years earlier, Kuilun was eager to prove his military worth. He had proposed, while still on his way to Sichuan, tightening the encirclement of the insurgents progressively and pressing them out of their perimeter of survival by setting up pitfalls

and land mines, and poisoning their water sources.[179] When he arrived at Dazhou, to his surprise, Kuilun found that the city was at peace, and the battlegrounds were hundreds of *li* away. Fueled by both the Hu Qilun case and Hong Liangji's letter, Jiaqing had become more eager to battle war-front corruption by the time Kuilun reached Dazhou. Insisting that there would likely be more financial fraud in Sichuan, Jiaqing directed Kuilun to concentrate only on logistics and the investigations of Lebao and Funing as well as Ingšan and Yimian but released him from military responsibility. Jiaqing also ordered Lin Jun, Sichuan's administrative commissioner, to cooperate with Kuilun and Guwanghing in order to be excused from hiding their wrongdoings for years.[180]

Nevertheless, it soon proved that prosecuting the sophisticated Lebao was a completely different matter from prosecuting Hu Qilun, who had unwittingly prepared evidence for his prosecutors. The accounts at the Dazhou logistical bureau were flawless, detailed, and clear, showing that all the monies that Lebao had claimed, 2.6 million, had been used legitimately, largely for paying soldiers' and officers' stipends and periodical awards. He did not falsify the numbers of troops to gain more funds either. As for Lebao's personal expenditures, the logistical staff purchased everything for him, but Lebao paid off all the expenses monthly with his "silver for nourishing virtue" allowance. In fact, Lebao still had 1,500-plus taels of his allowance outstanding. Although Kuilun discovered more and more loopholes in the war expenditures, his interrogations of Lebao and Funing were unproductive. Lebao admitted only a few noneconomic accusations such as not paying enough attention to the troops' well-being, not reporting the rebels' penetration of Hubei in a timely way, not disciplining bannermen when they disturbed the locals, and so on, but categorically denied any financial offense.[181] Funing did not admit any wrongdoing in war finances either. It is likely the two colluded in dealing with the investigation. Unhappy about Lebao's dismissal, his subordinates allegedly petitioned Kuilun, asking him to appeal for Lebao, though Kuilun did not mention this in his memorials. Meanwhile, Kuilun had to continue using some of Lebao's people in managing logistics, since he had no personnel to replace them.[182]

Startled, puzzled, and a bit dejected, Kuilun found it impossible to pin Lebao down for any financial crimes. In his first report on the investigation, Kuilun, toning down his rhetoric, explained to the emperor that some charges against Lebao could not hold. Nevertheless, Kuilun unequivocally expressed his profound doubts. He thought that Lebao and Funing had had sufficient time to mend the gaps in the accounts, given that Lebao had offered to have people from the capital come to Sichuan to examine the accounts as early as

in the seventh month, and they were well aware of Kuilun's mission of examining financial records.[183] Unable to indict Lebao on financial charges, Kuilun nevertheless proposed, in the middle of the tenth month, the penalty of immediate death for Lebao on the basis that he had deliberately delayed military actions, thus hindering the war's progress. According to Qing law, such conduct warranted capital punishment.[184]

Although Jiaqing concurred with Kuilun in disbelieving Lebao's perfect financial records and suspecting that Lebao, Funing, and others had cooked the books, Jiaqing retreated from his earlier intent to sacrifice Lebao for a cleaner campaign. While pushing Kuilun to continue digging for evidence, he shifted his attention to the nonfinancial charges against Lebao.[185] Still, he wished to create the façade of a stern ruler. On 04/10/12, when the Grand Council and the Ministry of Punishment proposed to sentence Hu Qilun to awaiting death until the following autumn assizes, Jiaqing changed it to immediate death by hanging, stating that, inasmuch as the war-front corruption started in Hubei, Hu should be severely punished to send a warning to all the generals and logistical personnel in the ongoing campaign.[186] The first death penalty given to an official in the campaign, Hu's death might help silence criticism of the emperor for being too lenient in treatment of guilty officials, as articulated by Hong Liangji in his letter.

Hu's death also helped shield Lebao from capital punishment—one example was enough for Jiaqing's image making. In the meantime, Jiaqing might have heard, through secret conduits of information, some clamor from the war front protesting Lebao's dismissal and expressing displeasure about Kuilun. Moreover, Lebao pledged a "donation" of 30,000 taels to the state on his arrest and yielded 20,000 taels in cash instantly.[187] On receiving Kuilun's suggestion of the death penalty for Lebao, Jiaqing commuted the sentence to imprisonment awaiting execution. Declaring that Lebao's crime was not as serious as Mingliang's, Jiaqing instead enumerated Lebao's contributions in both the Miao and White Lotus campaigns, including his captures of Wang Sanhuai and Leng Tianlu, though he added that Lebao did not capture them himself but only supervised the operations in which the two were caught—he avoided mentioning Lebao's deceitful conduct in Wang Sanhuai's capture, which alone could secure Lebao a death penalty. Jiaqing also defended Lebao's staying in Dazhou as due to a misunderstanding of his own directive to stay in a spot central to all the battlegrounds. Meanwhile, Jiaqing ordered no search of Lebao's home, for such an action was only applied to those who had been convicted of corruption.[188] As a result, the corruption charge against Lebao was dropped, which left the amount of war

funds Lebao had embezzled so far a mystery. In addition to Lebao's 30,000 taels, lobbying by Lebao's friends might also have played a role in the sharp turn in Jiaqing's attitude.

Nevertheless, sparing Lebao did not mean that Jiaqing had softened his determination to rectify war finances. A few days after he ordered the death of Hu Qilun, Jiaqing told Songyun of his intention of conducting investigations of war expenditures in both Henan and Shaanxi.[189] Meanwhile, Jiaqing kept pressure on Kuilun to continue examining the logistical accounts in Dazhou, for he still suspected that Lebao and the logistical staff had altered the books. But he cautioned Kuilun not to press if there was indeed no evidence.[190] After having failed to break the impasse by interrogating Funing,[191] Kuilun ordered the arrest of two logistical officials, Cao Xiangye and Shi Zuorui, both Lebao's protégés, hoping to acquire more evidence from them.

The prefect of Luzhou, Cao Xiangye might have been brought to the campaign by Lebao when the latter passed Luzhou in early 1798. Lebao then assigned Cao to act as Kuizhou prefect and take charge of logistics in Kuizhou. Cao had dealt out more than 180,000 taels of silver before he asked for sick leave when Kuilun arrived in Sichuan. Like Hu Qilun, Cao had also misappropriated war funds and sent gifts to commanders including Lebao. Before Kuilun's agents arrived in Kuizhou to arrest him, Cao had boarded a boat and sailed upstream toward his home in Chongqing. When Kuilun's men stopped the boat, they found that Cao had just died but discovered 15,000 taels of silver hidden in two dozen boxes of noodles. Shi Yunyu, Chongqing prefect and another Lebao protégé, came to examine Cao's body and subsequently pronounced that Cao had died a natural death. Cao's family, clerks, and servants all insisted that the money was Cao's own savings after being a prefect for years. Lebao's family stated that Lebao's wife had only accepted foodstuffs from Cao but turned down other gifts such as silks and 1,000 taels of silver.[192] As such, Cao's death cut off valuable leads in Kuilun's investigation and ever remained a mystery. In fact, two logistical officials at the Dazhou logistical bureau, Cheng Xun and Li Xianyi, both circuit intendants, also died of "illnesses" shortly before Kuilun's arrival.[193] Although impossible to prove, those mysterious deaths might have had something to do with the flawless accounts in the Dazhou logistical bureau.

Shi Zuorui, another circuit intendant in Sichuan, came to Ingšan's service when the rebellion started, first organizing militias and then joining the logistical office in Dazhou. After Lebao arrived, Shi became Lebao's right arm in handling war finances. Lebao had recommended Shi's promotion to the rank of provincial administrative commissioner when he submitted a long list of names for promotions and awards in

the wake of Wang Sanhuai's capture.[194] It was only revealed later that Shi had spent war funds liberally in treating commanders to scrumptious and frequent banquets and mountains of gifts (for example, he once gave three *hu* of pearls and ten thousand bolts of silk to one official from Beijing).[195] Like Lebao and Funing, Shi did not confess truthfully. Approving Kuilun's arrests of the two, Jiaqing told Kuilun to use the two deceased logistical officials, Cheng Xun and Li Xianyi, as scapegoats (namely, to declare the two responsible for all the wrongdoings) to entice the logistical staff to tell the truth.[196] Likely deterred by Jiaqing's change of position regarding Lebao, Kuilun became more cautious and less assertive. He instead counted on the arrival of Guwanghing, a younger and fearless maverick, to continue the investigations in Dazhou.[197]

While tackling the difficult prosecution of Lebao and Funing, Kuilun operated on another front: to try to close loopholes in logistics and whittle down expenses. This operation was bound to be unwelcome with the generals; even Eldemboo, the acknowledged paragon in financial matters, outwardly showed his displeasure. While repeatedly telling the emperor that Kuilun was not experienced in war, Eldemboo urged Kuilun time and again to swiftly wrap up his investigations and join the fighting, despite Jiaqing's declaration that Kuilun had no military responsibility. Each time Jiaqing patiently but firmly deflected Eldemboo's nudge, insisting that Kuilun stay in Dazhou to take charge of logistics and the investigations.[198]

Unlike Lebao, who had made sure that he always had sufficient military forces at his fingertips, Kuilun did not initially recognize its importance. On his arrival at Dazhou, Kuilun immediately sent Besiyang to lead 1,600 of Lebao's troops and send the seal of the grand minister commander to Eldemboo. Kuilun then sent to Eldemboo three of the four imperial guardsmen who had come to Sichuan with him. Only after he discovered that about 2,000 of the 2,600 troops in Dazhou were invalids, recuperating from either injuries or illnesses, did Kuilun ask Eldemboo to give him some troops.[199] Eldemboo subsequently assigned to Kuilun two thousand troops and sent Besiyang back to lead them. However, upon the emperor's last reminder that Kuilun did not have to fight, Eldemboo redirected Besiyang and the two thousand men to guard the transportation route between Dazhou and Taiping, and sent away Chunning, the last imperial guardsman who had come to Sichuan with Kuilun. Not seeing that those arrangements left Kuilun in a vulnerable situation, Jiaqing endorsed them.[200]

Clearly, the commander-in-chief was not on good terms with the new logistical boss. One of the major clashes between them centered on the expense for hiring horses or mules for an extended period to

carry supplies, called *changluo*, or "long-term mules," which was not sanctioned by the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*. Under Lebao, the Dazhou bureau had paid 9 taels per month for each draft animal. Given that tens of thousands of draft animals had allegedly been hired, this had been one of the costliest expenditures, amounting to hundreds of thousands of taels a month. Although he knew that this expense had been extensively abused, Kuilun was nevertheless hesitant to abolish the "long-term mules," for Eldemboo had complained to him about shortages of supplies at the front. Therefore, Kuilun proposed to keep the practice, citing that "long-term mules" had existed and been endorsed during the Miao campaign, but to lower the rate demanded by Eldemboo's logistical staff to 9.7 taels per animal per month.[201] However, Jiaqing was uncompromising; he rejected Kuilun's proposal on the basis that the Miao areas were frontiers, but Sichuan and Shaanxi were heartlands. Moreover, he was irate that the rate Kuilun proposed was even higher than that under Lebao, suspecting that Kuilun had been fooled by the logistical staff that used this item to disguise their misappropriation of funds or to fill holes in the accounts resulting from malpractice earlier in the war. Pressed by the throne, Kuilun did away with the long-term mules. To conciliate the generals, he instituted a rule that forty long-term porters be hired for every hundred soldiers. Although this exceeded what was stipulated by the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, it reduced the expense by half.[202]

Unconcerned for Kuilun's difficult situation, Jiaqing continued urging him to adhere to high standards and carry out a thorough housecleaning. He forbade Kuilun to use new funds to pay back the arrears but demanded he give priority to the troops' needs. He instructed Kuilun to coordinate with Eldemboo to send invalid troops back to their home garrisons in order to cut costs.[203] Early in the eleventh month, Kuilun submitted a long report on the mismanagement and loopholes in Sichuan's war finances and proposed a set of new regulations. Among other things, he required the logistical staff to submit reports every ten days and clear accounts each month. In addition to the abolition of the long-term mules, Kuilun also intended to standardize expenses by using those of Eldemboo's forces as yardsticks.[204] When Guwanghing arrived in Dazhou about this time, he moved quickly to detect more loopholes and illicit practices. He singled out expenses for hiring militias as another extremely costly as well as fraudulent expenditure and then strived to slash the oversized militias (there had been more than two hundred thousand militiamen on the payroll in Sichuan in 1797–1798). Jiaqing willingly gave his approval to those new regulations and reforms. Although he said that he could be flexible, even in

breaching the statute if indispensable for the final victory—for ending the war would mean a great savings of money and protracting the war would cost more—the tone was set to be more stringent about expenditures. In short, he would readily ax all that could be axed.[205]

Some of the measures adopted in Sichuan might have been influenced by the new regulations that Songyun had set up in Shaanxi. Before Kuilun arrived in Sichuan, Jiaqing had instructed him to take note of what Songyun had done to straighten up logistics and enclosed a copy of Songyun's proposal with his instructions to Kuilun.[206] But one reform that Kuilun did not copy from Shaanxi was to discontinue the *shanghao* practice by which generals granted periodic awards to the troops, mainly in cash in this campaign. When Songyun arrived in Hanzhong and took over logistics in Shaanxi in the early summer, he requested to use his own "silver to nourish virtue" allowance, 2,000 taels per year, to award the troops and militiamen in Shaanxi.[207] Following suit, both Nayancheng and Taibu, on their arrival, proposed to take money out of their income for this purpose. Jiaqing agreed to Taibu's request, letting him take two-years' nourishing-virtue allowance in advance, but declined Nayancheng's, saying that he had to support his widowed mother and family. Again showing favor to the upstart, Jiaqing granted Nayancheng 6,000 taels for awarding his troops, which would be taken from Shaanxi's provincial treasury instead of war funds.[208]

All these moves by the newly arrived officials in Sichuan and Shaanxi created hope for Jiaqing: since all of them were clean, conscientious, and reform-minded, they did not have a hidden agenda to intentionally delay the completion of the campaign.[209] On 04/11/24, Jiaqing took on the *shanghao* practice in Sichuan himself. He granted 10,000 taels to Eldemboo and 5,000 taels to Delengtai for awarding troops and instructed that those monies be taken from Sichuan's provincial treasury and not from the war chest in Dazhou, which was meant to close the door for the generals to use war funds for this expense.[210] Compared with what the generals had previously received, those royal grants were too parsimonious to make them grateful. Moreover, the timing exacerbated the effect of the coup de grâce: the New Year was only one month away, for which the troops would expect unusually generous bonuses. Although it took some time for the bitter reactions of the military personnel to reach the center, Kuilun, who epitomized the reforms that cut their wartime earnings, would bear their brunt (and to a lesser degree Guwanghing because he arrived later and was busy reducing the militias). The seeds of Kuilun's downfall had been sown.

Back at the military front, the war in 1799 was not proceeding as smoothly as Jiaqing had hoped. In Hubei, Wesibu had indeed exaggerated the size of the Xu Tiande and Li Shu band going to Hubei in the summer, which had only several thousand people, instead of twenty thousand as he had claimed. However, several Xiangyang groups, including Zhang Tianlun, Fan Renjie, and Xin Cong, had penetrated Hubei's Badong from Sichuan about the same time and then moved north, apparently aiming at Xiangyang.[211] When he heard of the emergency in Hubei, Jiaqing spared no effort to secure the province, ordering another two thousand bannermen from Jilin and Heilongjiang to Hubei (two thousand bannermen had been deployed from Shengjing earlier), and urged both Mingliang and Eldemboo to go to Hubei.[212] However, the situation in Hubei soon turned in the Qing's favor when Wesibu and Sun Qingyuan, a regional vice commander, routed the Xu-Li force in Nanzhang, allegedly killing and capturing over two thousand, early in the eighth month. With their plan of going to Xiangyang doomed, the Xu-Li force turned southwest and returned to Sichuan from Badong. En route Li Shu died from his wounds.[213]

The Xiangyang insurgents lingered in Hubei for another month. After having arrived in Hubei late in the seventh month, Delengtai and Zhu Shedou first shattered, in Zhuxi, the Thread Band, which had only two thousand people, and captured Gong Wenyu while Gong Qiwei jumped off a cliff.[214] Then they repelled Fan Renjie to Daning, and Zhang Tianlun and Xin Cong to Pingli.[215] By the ninth month, Hubei was again free of conflict; the destruction was limited since the areas affected were mostly mountainous and sparsely populated.[216] Although he was granted a hereditary rank for Hubei's pacification, Wesibu was harshly criticized by the emperor for exaggerating the gravity of the incident.[217] It had been a wartime commonplace for officials to overstate the danger in their jurisdictions so that they could receive reinforcements, more funds, and tax relief. But this incident had an unusual repercussion: it helped take down Lebao. Upset by Lebao's dismissal, Eldemboo was also livid over Wesibu's exaggeration.[218]

By that time, many original rebel leaders had died, and the surviving insurgents were struggling. After being repulsed from Gansu, Zhang Shihu's Blue Band and Yang Kaijia's White Band went adrift in northern Sichuan, both having only several hundred people left. Zhang Tianlun and Xin Cong had barely a thousand people after their return to Sichuan from Hubei.[219] But the truly committed insurgents regrouped, forming new bands and upholding new leaders. One group of insurgents from Xiangyang took over Wang Conger's mantle, calling the new band the Qi Family Regiment (Qijiaying). However,

thousands were lost, including Wang Conger's niece, Qi Sigu, or "Fourth Aunt Qi," in a defeat by Eldemboo on the Shaanxi-Sichuan border at the end of the summer, leaving only hundreds in the band.[220] The most notable new band of Xiangyang origin was the Gao Family Regiment (Gaojiaying). Although Gao Junde was its mastermind, he retreated into obscurity by using an alias, Hao Yizhi, and let his uncle, Gao Chengjie, known as Gao Er or "Gao the Second," and Ma Chaoli, known as Ma Wu or "Ma the Fifth," lead the band publicly.[221] Another new band, the Dai Family Regiment (Daijiaying) was headed by Dai Shijie, known as Dai Si or "Dai the Fourth," a Zhang Hanchao follower in his early twenties. Wang Tingzhao, the de facto pope of the sectarian rebels, often stayed with either the Gao Family Regiment or the Dai Family Regiment and managed to conceal his own whereabouts. It was Wang who suggested that Gao Junde use the alias to dodge attention from the enemy.[222] These two groups often acted in concert.

Although the insurgents of Xiangyang and Sichuan did sometimes mingle, in the main the two cohorts stayed apart. Among the Sichuan insurgents, Xu Tiande's group remained the biggest, perhaps having five or six thousand people when it returned to Sichuan from Hubei, likely owing to Xu's being open to the Xiangyang cohort.[223] Wang Dengting, who was Xu's disciple, was leading his own band and wandered in his home area. Meanwhile, Luo Qiqing's and Ran Wenchou's remnants assembled new bands. Ran Tianyuan, Ran Wenchou's nephew and a gifted commander, revived the Blue Band, which would soon stun the Qing forces with its ferociousness. Two of Luo Qiqing's followers, Gou Wenming (Gou's sister was married to Luo's younger brother) and Xian Dachuan, both from Bazhou, had created their own bands, active on Sichuan's mountainous northeastern borders.

Having often ripped his commanders for catching only the rebel chiefs, which left ample odds for the insurgent remnants to revive, Jiaqing reiterated, when he made Eldemboo the new commander-in-chief, that the commanders should try also to catch all the relatives of the rebel chiefs when they defeated a certain band.[224] At the time of his appointment, Eldemboo was tackling several bands in northern Sichuan. Perhaps encouraged by his promotion, Eldemboo again demonstrated his efficacy. In the mid-ninth month, Eldemboo nearly annihilated a band of one thousand people, which had absorbed many remnants of the Qi Family Regiment, in Guangyuan and had its chief killed.[225] By the end of the month, Eldemboo had pushed most rebel groups in Shaanxi to Sichuan's Tongjiang and Nanjiang, as he had planned, while Zhu Shedou along with Li Shaozu, a regional military commander, and Qishiwu, a decorated Manchu bannerman and

provincial military commander of Sichuan, had forced Xu Tiande and his several thousand people to Dongxiang.[226]

Delengtai might have been stimulated by Eldemboo's taking command. As Songyun had pointed out, Delengtai "can be considered gallant when it comes to fighting and killing bandits."[227] Indeed, Delengtai could be effective when he desired. In mid-autumn, Delengtai pursued Xin Cong from Hubei to Shaanxi, where he encountered the newly formed Gao Family Regiment. On 04/10/06, he fought against the regiment in Xixiang, allegedly killing more than one thousand and capturing Gao Junde, Gao Chengjie, the wife of Ma the Fifth, and several other chiefs as well as hundreds of insurgents and their families. For this victory, Jiaqing granted Delengtai the noble rank of baron of the second grade and named him grand minister consultant, making him Eldemboo's deputy commander.[228] Eager to earn more awards, Delengtai fought more in the weeks to come. However, he reported false merits amid creditable ones.[229] To the throne, most agreeable was Delengtai's estimate that only a dozen or so thousand insurgents were left at large, who had been cornered and exhausted, often in rags and barefoot since it had become increasingly difficult to acquire supplies after many residents in Sichuan had secured their foodstuffs in their forts. "The numbers of the bandits are decreasing day by day, but the imperial troops are ever valiant," Delengtai reported, although he admitted that new bands were emerging.[230]

Eldemboo was no less optimistic. In his first memorial as commander-in-chief, submitted in the early tenth month, he stressed that the insurgents were at the end of their strength, even though he was aware of the multiplication of new bands and chiefs. He insisted on driving all the rebels to Sichuan while barring them from going to Hubei and Shaanxi. To carry out this plan, he demanded that Nayancheng and most of the newly arrived bannermen head to Sichuan.[231] Eldemboo's proposals, especially giving orders to Nayancheng, served to assert his full authority as commander-in-chief, because Jiaqing had indicated earlier that Eldemboo did not have to take care of all the theaters but was only responsible for his own.[232] Despite Eldemboo's hinting at his potential discord with Nayancheng, Jiaqing was pleased by his optimistic outlook. That coupled with Zhang Hanchao's death and Delengtai's victories made the emperor hopeful again; he set up a new deadline, giving his forces another two and a half months to complete the campaign within the fourth year of his reign.[233] Although he soon revised his deadline in the mid-eleventh month, extending it for another two or three months to clear all rebel remnants, he remained upbeat. Having some concerns about Nayancheng's progress in clearing Zhang Hanchao's remnants, he

instructed Eldemboo and Nayancheng to cooperate, not limiting themselves to their own provinces, which was meant to nudge Eldemboo to help Nayancheng once he finished his own job.[234]

Jiaqing was again too optimistic. By the end of 1799, when many of the insurgent bands rendezvoused in northeastern Sichuan, a loose coalition had been formed among Ran Tianyuan, Fan Renjie, Xu Tiande, and Wang Dengting. Acting in a concerted manner, sometimes merging into one, the four bands aimed at assailing the Qing transportation route. Despite their diminished numbers, those who had stayed were mostly the committed and would repeatedly prove their potency.[235] In a battle at the beginning of the eleventh month, they killed Anlu, an imperial guardsman who held the highest noble rank, duke, inherited from his father, Hailanca, an outstanding general of the late Qianlong era. Similar to Qianlong's reaction to Huilun's death in 1797, Jiaqing was deeply sorrowful, thinking it an unworthy sacrifice for banner aristocrats to engage with "petty and scruffy bandits."[236] Shortly after, in a bloody fight at a hamlet in Bazhou, Hejiayuan, the rebel coalition dealt heavy casualties to Eldemboo's force; several high-ranking Manchu officers, including Chunning and Gebushe, were among the injured, although Eldemboo claimed that his troops had killed more than one thousand rebels and captured hundreds.[237]

After the battle at Hejiayuan, the insurgents seemed to be implementing a new plan: Xu Tiande and Fan Renjie headed again to Hubei, while Ran Tianyuan and Wang Dengting stayed in Sichuan, which could serve to divert Eldemboo's attention. Most likely, they parted ways before a battle in Tongjiang in the mid-eleventh month.[238] While Xu and Fan moved out of Eldemboo's sight, Ran Tianyuan led his Blue Band and went westward to Cangxi. At the end of the eleventh month and a few days before the end of 1799, Eldemboo suffered a disastrous defeat. In a battle lasting all night at Cangxi's Qingziya, Ran Tianyuan's men managed to capture a hill from two Manchu officers, Ahabao and Mukedengbu, and then charged their enemy from the top. When Ran led away his force in the early dawn, he left more than three hundred Qing soldiers and militiamen as well as thirteen veteran officers dead.[239] Arguably the worst defeat Eldemboo had had in this campaign, this fiasco would significantly and adversely affect Jiaqing's perspective on the campaign when the news reached Beijing at the beginning of 1800.

North of the Han River, Nayancheng's hunt for Zhang Hanchao's hundreds of remnants had not been fruitful.[240] Having taken over Mingliang's and Xingzhao's forces and then being joined by three thousand Shengjing and Jilin bannermen,[241] Nayancheng had more than ten thousand troops, mostly bannermen. Jiaqing charged him to

first clear out Zhang's remnants and then fight other insurgents south of the Han River. Even though it was already the eleventh month, the emperor insisted that Nayancheng comply with the deadline of completing the campaign before the end of the lunar year.[242] Despite his massive military force, Nayancheng was not confident about fulfilling his task in the depths of Qinling Mountains. In his first reports from the frontline—he did not submit a memorial until weeks after his arrival, likely trying to figure out a strategy—Nayancheng freely expressed his concerns and even frustrations. He marveled at the wildness of the mountains and detailed many of the difficulties he had encountered. He complained that the troops and the cumbersome logistical corps could not move fast in the mountains, which were perennially covered with snow and ice, and often pathless, whereas the insurgents were more conversant with the conditions in the mountains since they had trekked through them several times, and they, without the burden of logistics, simply looted the residents and refugees in the mountains for supplies. When it came to the operations, it was not possible to surround the rebels and apply pincer attacks, and the denseness of trees and bushes compromised the effects of fire arms and bows. Apparently at a loss, Nayancheng requested more bannermen as his force became smaller by leaving troops to guard all the passes.[243]

Nayancheng's pessimism disappointed and upset Jiaqing, who criticized everything Nayancheng had done or suggested, including his poetic depiction of the scenery of the Qinling Mountains, ending his edict with the rare expression "tearfully instructing."[244] The high expectations from Jiaqing in turn made Nayancheng more eager to produce success. However, after having encountered the insurgents eight times in ten days since he had arrived at the frontline, he had not gained a decisive victory, save killing dozens to scores of rebels each time, as the insurgents immediately ran into the forest once they saw the Qing forces. Convinced that the only way to deal with the enemy's guerrilla warfare was to adopt guerrilla warfare himself, Nayancheng deequipped his troops and sent them into the forest in dispatches. Leading one dispatch, Nayancheng entered the forest himself, walking on foot wherever horses could not pass.[245]

Jiaqing was again disapproving of Nayancheng's decision, thinking that it was simply reckless for him or any major commander to go into the forests to pursue the rebels. He wanted Nayancheng to choose able troops to enter the forest and drive the rebels out so that the main Qing forces could finish them up outside. He suggested that they might even burn the forest to achieve that purpose.[246] But Nayancheng did not give in, arguing that his presence boosted his troops' morale and enabled him to make timely adjustments when contingencies

occurred, although he continued complaining about the many hurdles, such as poor visibility in the forest, disconnectedness among different dispatches, and the rebel remnants' determination to fight to the end. Then, Nayancheng begged for more time to bring his own plan to fruition.[247] At the beginning of 1800, Jiaqing once more ordered Nayancheng to pull out and close the passes into the forest, and then wait for Eldemboo to come after he finished off the rebels in Sichuan. Jiaqing also told Nayancheng to give one thousand bannermen to Eldemboo, given his sizable army. But Nayancheng refused, insisting that those bannermen, who were hardy in the mountainous and wintry environment and superb in horseback archery, were indispensable to him. Again he complained that it was not sufficient to have fourteen thousand regulars north of the Han River.[248]

South of the Han River, the Xiangyang and Sichuan insurgents had tried repeatedly and desperately to approach and cross the river throughout the latter part of 1799. Whereas some intended to link up with Zhang's remnants or go to Hubei or Henan, some others were simply pressed by the scarcity of supplies in the Daba Mountains. At times, the fighting was ferocious. In a battle lasting for three days at the end of the summer in Xing'an, the Qing side lost ten officers and over three hundred soldiers and militiamen.[249] To step up a river defense, more militiamen were hired, and two thousand troops were deployed from Shanxi to the riverbank. Overseen by Wang Wenxiong, the provincial military commander of Guyuan who was stationed in Xixiang, the Qing forces managed to thwart all crossing attempts by different rebel groups.[250]

With no luck breaking the Qing defense at the river, the rebels looked east and west for alternatives. Xu Tiande, Fan Renjie, Xin Cong, and others moved to Hubei from both Sichuan and Shaanxi. Although they were repulsed, the pressure on the three borders had built up.[251] Meanwhile, the remainder of the Gao Family Regiment, now led by Ma the Fifth and a new "Gao the Second" whose name was Gao Tiansheng—consequently the group began to be known as the Gao-Ma Band—moved westward to Gansu. In Sichuan, Ran Tianyuan was poised to become a new magnetic leader. Following his splendid victory at Qingziya, he attracted other groups under his banner. Almost a year after the Jiaqing emperor launched his psychological campaign to dismantle the rebellion, few rebels had surrendered, although Jiaqing reiterated his new policy each time he appointed a new commander-in-chief.[252] When the year 1799 came to its end, the rebellion was not on its deathbed, whereas Jiaqing's reform to tackle war-front corruption had begun to backfire, which would soon lead to a serious setback for the suppressors.

CHAPTER 4

REVERSAL
1800

> I have taken my emperor father's mind as my own mind and adopted his policy as my own policy. In following all the rules he set, I am only concerned that I cannot uphold his standard. How could I have made any "reform"?
>
> —THE JIAQING EMPEROR, 1799

THE year 1799 merits consideration as the most vibrant year in the generally lethargic White Lotus War. Despite his vacillations, misjudgments, and frequent changes of mind at the eleventh hour, the Jiaqing emperor revamped the war leadership, sending to the war zone a group of reform-minded officials and backing their efforts to tackle war-front corruption. Nevertheless, 1800 was to become the year of reversal. As tension grew between the reformers and the generals who had been accustomed to unbridled expenditures, Eldemboo and Delengtai manufactured a crisis in the Sichuan theater at the start of the year, leading to the insurgents' crossing of the Jialing River and roaming in the fertile and hitherto undisturbed Chengdu plain. Unnerved by the sudden deterioration in Sichuan and disillusioned with the new leaders, who had also come to strife among themselves, Jiaqing reinstated Lebao and sent away the reformers one after another. Among them, Kuilun received the one and only death penalty given to a high-ranking official in this war. Although the insurgents were soon subdued in Sichuan as well as other battleground provinces and Liu Zhixie was arrested after years of hiding, the war against a total of about twenty thousand insurgents was again deadlocked by the end of 1800. With all the reforms instituted in 1799 nullified, the Jiaqing emperor had shed the mantle of reformer, retreating to the stance of his true self: indecisive and

diffident.[1]

THE JIALING RIVER DEBACLE AND LEBAO'S RETURN

At the beginning of 1800, with the approach of the New Year (January 25, 1800) and the first anniversary of his taking the reins of government, Jiaqing became more vexed with the campaign that had dragged on for four years, for he would not be able to report triumph when he visited his father's mausoleum on New Year's Day. He was nevertheless heartened by the positive signals he caught in reports from the frontlines and his interviews with returned envoys: the insurgents had been cornered and exhausted, their total size dwindling to about twenty thousand, and their perimeter of activities limited to only northern Sichuan and southern Shaanxi. Lacking a unified leadership and with a ragtag following, the insurgents were on the brink of disintegration, he deduced and hoped.[2]

Yet the final victory did not seem sure or near. Having missed several deadlines in 1799, the emperor made a pitch for a new one, the end of the second month of the fifth year of his reign. In the weeks before the New Year, Jiaqing issued numerous edicts to urge his commanders, in increasingly strident tones, to accelerate their operations. He was worried that the arrival of the spring and the subsequent harvest season would rejuvenate the rebels, whereas the spring rains would hamper the campaign. He told both Eldemboo and Nayancheng that he would severely punish anyone who procrastinated as he had done to Lebao and Mingliang. When the news of Eldemboo's disastrous defeat at Qingziya reached the court on 04/12/12, Jiaqing's pessimism deepened.[3] Although his spirits were lifted somewhat a few days later by the capture of Wang Dengting, he no longer believed that the enemy was really "depleted" as the generals had reported.[4]

Like his father, Jiaqing complained that there were no high-ranking officials whom he could trust to replace the current leaders. However, when an official proposed that the emperor send a prince to lead the campaign, he categorically rejected the suggestion, arguing that the campaign was against merely a few "rebellious civilians" (*luanmin*) rather than a foreign enemy, and he could not penalize a prince in the event that he failed to achieve a victory.[5] Running out of options, he entertained the possibility of reinstating Mingliang and Lebao. In fact, he had deliberately put off interrogating Mingliang.[6] As it was unusual to send back generals who had been dismissed (and brought to trial and sentenced in Lebao's case), this idea must have resulted from the lobbying for the two censured officials at the court. Also, if Lebao had paid to lessen his penalty, he might have done the same for his release and reinstatement, given that he had deep pockets. It is interesting

that Jiaqing had ordered a search of Mingliang's home twice—not much was found since Mingliang was a spender, not a saver—but he had refrained from doing the same to Lebao.

Jiaqing also revisited his psychological warfare, which had borne little effect.[7] To reiterate his position, Jiaqing chose to target Funing's massacres of two thousand surrendered rebels following the battle of Qiguzhai. He repeatedly denounced Funing and ordered Kuilun to conduct a thorough investigation.[8] In a drastic expansion of his carrot-and-stick policy, Jiaqing declared in an edict on 05/01/09 that he would pardon all rebels, not only the civilians coerced into the rebellion but also the "true" sectarian insurgents, as long as they surrendered, and, more important, he would no longer persecute sectarian followers if they practiced their beliefs peacefully. While urging his generals and viceroys in the war zone to widely advocate these amendments,[9] Jiaqing gave more detailed instructions on the "pacification" (*fu*) of the insurgents. He wanted the war leaders not only to lure coerced and misled people from the rebel ranks but also to resettle them properly. To shield the civilians from being caught by the rebels, he reiterated the need for building forts and organizing militias.[10] Nevertheless, the events at the front soon sent the newly expanded conciliatory policy into abeyance.

The Jiaqing emperor was not aware at this moment and for a long time after that his bold efforts to right wrongs in war finances had aroused animosities at the front. Songyun had cautioned the previous autumn that an abrupt cutback of the military personnel's wartime income would hurt their morale.[11] Nevertheless, Jiaqing did not heed his advice. On the eve of the New Year in 1800, Jiaqing continued pushing Kuilun and Guwanghing to adhere to the new regulations and root out malpractice. He was satisfied that he had outlawed the practice by which commanders used war funds to award the troops, one of the leading abuses. After having granted a special fund of 10,000 taels to Eldemboo and 5,000 taels to Delengtai for awards to the troops, he tightened the reins further, obliging the generals to provide justification when they applied for new award funds from the logistical bureaus and authorizing Kuilun and Guwanghing to indict them or bring the case to his own attention if they thought a request illegitimate.[12]

Contrary to what the emperor had wished for, his niggardly grants touched off only acrimony. At first, Eldemboo requested to resign from the position of commander-in-chief, citing his Qingziya defeat, and asked the emperor to send a "general of luck" (*fujiang*) to lead the campaign. But Jiaqing turned him down and reassured Eldemboo of his trust.[13] Then Eldemboo openly defended the generals' practice of awarding the troops. Reminding the emperor that Fuk'anggan had

started this practice when he led several wars in the late Qianlong period, in which Eldemboo had participated, Eldemboo contended that he had merely followed Fuk'anggan's example by giving generous awards to both soldiers and civilians who made contributions to the war. Since his own stipend and allowances were not sufficient for those awards, he had requested funds from the logistical bureau in Dazhou, as he had stated. He thanked the emperor for the 10,000 taels, for it would "encourage the rank and filers at that critical moment of the campaign," and attached a list of awards he had issued with his memorial; he also hinted that the awards fell short of stimulating the troops to "finish the war in a timely manner."[14] However, this exchange was interrupted by a new crisis in southern Shaanxi.

Because of food shortages, the bands led by Ma the Fifth and Gao the Second, the Dai Family Regiment, and others, mostly of Xiangyang origin, perhaps totaling ten thousand, marched from northern Sichuan to Shaanxi through the snow-covered Daba Mountains. Wang Tingzhao was with them and perhaps planned this move. Having reached the Han River shortly before the New Year, they crushed the Qing forces at Mianxian and waded across the river.[15] On 04/12/27 and the following day, they broke the Qing garrison and crossed the Jialing River at Lüeyang's Yuguan, where the river was known as the Baishui River, and invaded Gansu's Huixian. Once in Gansu, the insurgents spread from Huixian to Chengxian, Liangdang, Xihe, Lixian, Qinzhou, and Gongchang.[16] Gansu was again a battleground.

The surge of the insurgents in southwestern Shaanxi overwhelmed Songyun, who had just been dismissed. Rushing to Hanzhong, Songyun scrambled for reinforcements to safeguard the plank trail and blockade the insurgents from going to Gansu, while reporting larger and larger numbers of rebels entering Shaanxi, from several thousand to twenty thousand.[17] Jiaqing instructed Songyun to stay put and allowed Qingcheng, who had reached Gansu en route to his exile in Ili, to rejoin the campaign, as Songyun requested.[18] He also urged Nayancheng and Hengšui to pull out from the Qinling Mountains and head to the border with Gansu. Claiming Nayancheng had "got himself into a dead end" (*ziquzhuolu*), he again castigated him for sinking deep into the forests for months, paying no attention to other places, which in Jiaqing's view had contributed to the current crisis.[19] Having less than full confidence in Nayancheng, whom he called not an experienced general but a "scholar" (*shusheng*), Jiaqing decided to send Delengtai to Shaanxi.[20]

The Gansu crisis set off a series of movements in Sichuan. On receiving Songyun's plea for help, Eldemboo, who had just recovered from a sickness, instantly decided to go to Shaanxi himself and leave

the operations in Sichuan to Delengtai. Although he had instructed Eldemboo to stay in Sichuan (while gently chiding Eldemboo for misinforming him on the insurgents' declining strength), Jiaqing endorsed his decision and changed the order to Delengtai, letting him stay in Sichuan to cooperate with Kuilun in tackling the rebels locally. Because Kuilun now had military duty, Jiaqing directed Yang Kui, the newly appointed provincial administrative commissioner, to assist Guwanghing with logistics.[21]

However, Eldemboo did not head to Shaanxi immediately. He first went to the city of Dazhou on 04/12/29 from Dongxiang's Wangjiazhai, where he had been getting over his sickness. Staying in Dazhou for several days to pass the New Year, Eldemboo clashed with Kuilun seriously on the "long-term mules." Although Kuilun made some compromises after Jiaqing had axed this expense, Eldemboo was still furious.[22] In a long memorial he submitted after he left Dazhou, he underscored the difficulties the Qing forces faced and the hardship his troops had endured. Casualties and sickness aside, many troops had been exhausted and demoralized by years' deployment and the high prices of foodstuffs and forage, whereas newly deployed soldiers were unskilled and unfamiliar with the terrain. He also complained of the cuts in the militias, for it left them insufficient in number and low in morale. Bitter and highly emotional, Eldemboo's message was unequivocal: the troops deserved to be better compensated.[23]

When he received Eldemboo's letter informing him of his going to Shaanxi, Delengtai was taking a recess in Daning—after he had pursued Xian Dachuan and Gou Wenming to Daning, he suspended all operations for the New Year.[24] Despite Eldemboo's instruction that he stay in Sichuan, Delengtai decided to go to Shaanxi too and told the throne of his decision a few days after the New Year. Furious over the cutting of the "long-term mules," Delengtai complained bitterly that, because supplies could not be delivered on time owing to the loss of the "long-term mules," his troops had to camp in the ice-and-snow-covered mountains in Daning without tents and cooking utensils for a long time, and many had suffered frost bite and even gone snow blind.[25] Jiaqing chose to ignore his complaints, and was initially opposed to Delengtai's planned move to Shaanxi. Berating him on his slow operations in Daning, Jiaqing ordered Delengtai to stay put and work with Kuilun, noting that Kuilun, despite his many years' service in Sichuan as a Green Standard officer, was not at home with fighting.[26]

However, Jiaqing changed Delengtai's assignment in a matter of days, for Hubei was again penetrated by the insurgents. Taking advantage of the major Qing forces' leaving for the Shaanxi-Gansu front, Xu Tiande and Fan Renjie led a coalition of several bands and

forced their way into Zhuxi from Pingli on 05/01/04. Then they moved to Fangxian and Baokang but were blocked by the Hubei forces led by Wesibu. Taking advantage of Delengtai's inaction in Daning, Xian Dachun and Gou Wenming went to Shaanxi and tried to break into Hubei. However, after assaulting the Hubei checkpoints on the borders for two weeks, they failed to get into Hubei and returned to Sichuan.[27] More concerned with Hubei than with Gansu, on 05/01/17, Jiaqing redirected Delengtai to Hubei's rescue and instructed Henan forces that had been stationed since 1797 on the north bank of the Han River in northwest Hubei to strengthen the river defense.[28] On the day after, Jiaqing made a surprising decision: he released Mingliang from imprisonment and hurried him to Hubei. Pointing to Mingliang's many merits from the Zunghar campaigns of the 1750s to his swift suppression of the Xiaogan uprising, Jiaqing vindicated Mingliang from the crimes he was charged with, even forgiving his accepting bribes from Hu Qilun, since they were for awarding his soldiers and the two searches of his home had proved that he had not amassed a huge amount of property.[29]

Eldemboo was opposed to Delengtai's move to Shaanxi. When he learned of it on arriving in Baoning on 05/01/08, Eldemboo sent an urgent letter to Delengtai trying to stop him from leaving Sichuan. However, Delengtai was already on his way (it is likely he received Eldemboo's letter but chose to ignore it). On 05/01/20, Delengtai joined Eldemboo and Songyun in Baocheng. Not knowing that the rebels had crossed the Jialing River in Sichuan a few days earlier, as will be narrated below, the three decided Delengtai would join the campaign in Gansu first, despite the emperor's order that Delengtai return to Sichuan (the order for him to go to Hubei had not arrived). They reported that both Eldemboo and Delengtai would return to Sichuan after Gansu was clear of the rebels.[30] Receiving their joint memorial and a memorial from Taibu reporting more insurgents coming to Shaanxi from Sichuan, some having crossed the Han River, the emperor changed his mind once again; he redirected Delengtai to Shaanxi's Shiquan to secure the Han River. As for the Hubei front, Jiaqing wanted Kuilun to pick another general from Sichuan—Qishiwu, Ahabao, or Zhu Shedou—and send him to Hubei.[31]

After both Eldemboo and Delengtai had pulled out, the most sizable Qing force in Sichuan was Qishiwu's five thousand troops. However, Qishiwu, Sichuan's provincial military commander, had been idle for months after arriving in Kuizhou in late 1799 to intercept the rebels from Hubei; Jiaqing had instructed Eldemboo to find out whether Qishiwu had deliberately dodged fighting.[32] Having been accustomed to generous wartime bonuses and awards while serving under Fuk'anggan for years, Qishiwu must have been dismayed by the war-

front reforms. When he did not receive any money from the emperor before the New Year, Qishiwu made a request to Guwanghing for 300 taels per month for awarding his troops. Not surprisingly, Guwanghing rejected the request, telling Qishiwu to request the funds when there was a reason to award his troops but not on a regular basis.[33] Demoralized, Qishiwu halted operations after he pursued a group of rebels to Daning.[34]

Those developments on the Qing side created an optimal opportunity for the insurgents in Sichuan. After his victory at Qingziya, Ran Tianyuan moved eastward to Taiping, Xinning, and Liangshan.[35] Right after Mukedengbu, who had tackled Ran, left for Shaanxi with Eldemboo, Ran headed to Linjiangshi, where he was joined by four other groups: the White Band led by Zhang Zicong, who came from Daning, where Qishiwu failed to check him; the Yellow Band led by Xu Wanfu; the Thread Band led by Chen Defeng; and the Black Band led by Wang Ying. A coalition was thus formed, and Ran Tianyuan was its commander-in-chief. Owing to the food shortages, the insurgents decided to go west and cross the Jialing River and then go north to join the Gao-Ma band and others in Shaanxi and Gansu.[36] Unlike in early 1798, when the rebels spent an extensive time in Linjiangshi for the New Year, the coalition swiftly set out and headed to the Jialing River.[37]

Kuilun, who was now in charge of military operations in Sichuan, was completely in the dark about the enemy. He thought that Xu Tiande was still in Sichuan but had no idea of the whereabouts of Ran Tianyuan's coalition, let alone its plan to go west. He reported only good news to the emperor on both the military front and regarding war financial reform, which reinforced Jiaqing's false impression that most insurgents had gone to either Shaanxi or Hubei, with only remnants left in Sichuan, even though Jiaqing was sometimes skeptical of Kuilun's accounts.[38] What Kuilun did not say was that he had become increasingly isolated in Sichuan. His conflict with the commanders aside, he had been increasingly at odds with Guwanghing regarding how to whittle down expenses. While Guwanghing was firmer and more idealistic, Kuilun was growing more realistic and moderate.[39]

Kuilun's change of attitude was most telling in his investigation of Funing's killing of surrendered rebels in 1796 and his possible misappropriation of war funds. Uncharacteristically, Kuilun defended Funing's massacres as being precautious and self-defensive, for Funing did not have sufficient force to keep more than one thousand fierce rebels under control. Funing's only fault, in Kuilun's eyes, was that he had failed to report the circumstances clearly. Kuilun also defended Funing's management of logistics, arguing that Funing had abided by

the rules, often rejecting unjustified requests from the generals, to the point that they were angry at him. Reporting only one breach by Funing—he had claimed nearly 5,000 taels from the logistic bureau for awarding the troops guarding Dazhou and the checkpoints nearby—Kuilun proposed to allow Funing to redeem his lapses by serving at the front without pay in addition to paying back the 5,000 taels. Kuilun's striking shift in position did not impress the emperor, who refused to pardon Funing and sought a more severe punishment because Funing's massacres had adverse repercussions, preventing the rebels from surrendering.[40]

The most serious disagreement between Kuilun and Guwanghing centered on cutting the massive militias in Sichuan. Having quickly identified militia-related expenses as one of the major causes of the campaign's enormous costs, Guwanghing had thrown himself into cutting them down (Funing had also started downsizing them before Guwanghing's arrival, which had aroused resentment from military leaders). However, Kuilun was ambivalent. Not only did he fear the deepening of his clash with the commanders, but Kuilun also saw some value in using militias, given that he did not have sufficient military forces at his own disposal. Therefore, he was discriminatory in shedding them. He cut or disbanded them in areas far away from the frontlines but hired more in the hot spots, such as along the border with Hubei. Moreover, Kuilun relied on the militias for the defense of the long Jialing River, a natural barrier for western Sichuan. When Guwanghing demobilized militias along the river, Kuilun managed to keep those in the river's upper valley between Guangyuan and Pengzhou.[41]

After Tojin returned to Beijing, he echoed Guwanghing's views to the emperor. Tojin criticized Kuilun for maintaining a wasteful defense system after the rebels had lost their vitality. Specifically, he singled out the garrisons and checkpoints west of the Jialing River in Zhaohua, Nanbu, and Pengzhou, where the insurgents had never set foot. But Kuilun vehemently defended his river defense efforts, arguing that the militias there had thwarted several crossing attempts by the insurgents. Having been swayed by Tojin initially, Jiaqing was then persuaded by Kuilun of the necessity for the garrisons and the militias in the three counties, as he had long been concerned with the safety of the Jialing River.[42] Yet the lower valleys had been overlooked even by Kuilun.

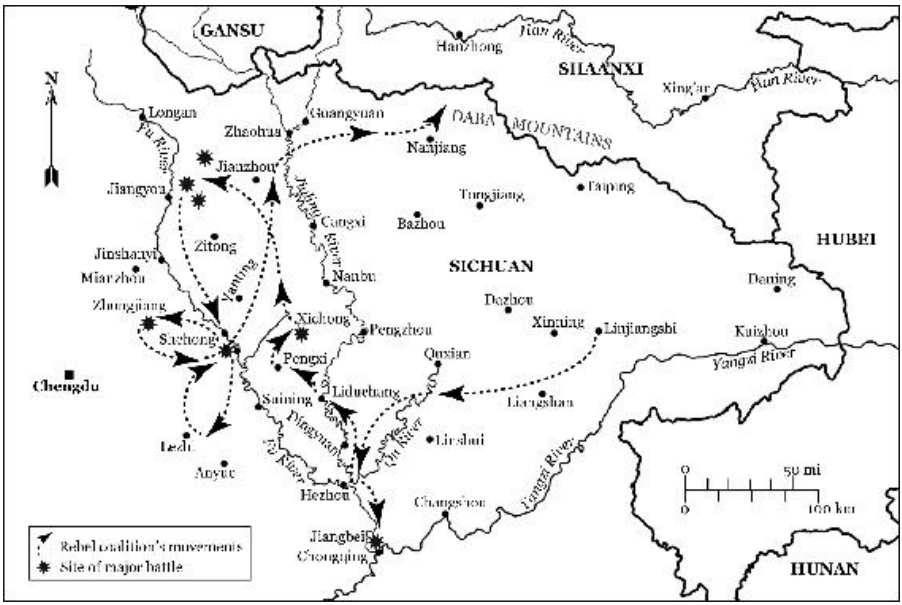
Despite his praise to both Kuilun and Guwanghing as being clean and conscientious, Jiaqing was increasingly inclined to favor Kuilun over Guwanghing.[43] Apparently, Guwanghing's audacious personality and uncompromising manner in managing war finances had alienated many; Jiaqing had been hearing rumors in Guwanghing's disfavor. On

05/01/10, Jiaqing replaced Guwanghing with Tojin as Sichuan's logistical boss and had Adisi act in the position before Tojin's return from Beijing.[44]

Nevertheless, Kuilun was to have a bigger problem than Guwanghing. When he scrambled for an expedition to tackle the several rebel bands in northeastern Sichuan, he discovered that most of the eight thousand troops Eldemboo had left to him were not useful, except for three hundred Solon cavalrymen led by Ahabao. The troops led by Xu Wenmo had been assigned by Eldemboo to guard Dazhou. Besiyang's several thousand troops were mostly invalids assigned to guarding logistical stations on their recovery, and they were poorly equipped. When Besiyang collected his troops and arrived in Dazhou, Kuilun took days to distribute their allowances, supplies, and equipment. Not until 05/01/08 did Kuilun lead the army and set out from Dazhou. But he had to stop at Leiyinpu in Dazhou's southern outskirts for another several days to furnish Zhu Shedou's troops, who arrived from Nanjiang and demanded that they first receive their long-overdue allowances.[45] When the expedition set off again, it went southeastward, for Kuilun still believed that there were only "scattered" rebels in Xinning and Liangshan hiding in the mountains who might have intended moving to Hubei.[46] (Map 4.1.)

Kuilun's slow and misguided moves left Ran's coalition free of any pressure. They crossed the Qu River with ease and quickly approached the Jialing River.[47] On 05/01/11, a dispatch in the thousands reached Jiangbei's Yuelaichang, across the Jialing River from the city of Chongqing. Shelled by the Chongqing troops from the south bank of the Jialing River, the insurgents left for Hezhou the following dawn, leaving dozens of rebels dead, although martial law in the city was not lifted until early summer.[48] By 05/01/14, the coalition arrived in Hezhou, but the width of the Jialing River there, more than half a mile, deterred them. Ran Tianyuan selected eight hundred fighters and hurried them northward to Dingyuan. On the rainy night of 05/01/15, the Lantern Festival, rebel scouts disguised as Qing troops reached Liduchang's Shibantuo ferry. Most boats were moored on the other bank, where a few militiamen were attending a lantern party—the militias in Dingyuan had been reduced by Funing the previous summer. Although Sun Xiyuan, Dingyuan's magistrate, had asked for funds to recruit more militiamen on learning that the insurgents were coming his way, it was too late. With only one-hundred-plus troops, Sun stayed inside the walled town of Dingyuan. At the ferry, the rebel scouts swam to the other shore, killed ferrymen, and seized boats. All the militiamen ran away. For three days, thousands of insurgents and coerced people—both sides estimated that their number totaled ten thousand—crossed the river, by boat or on horseback.[49] For the first

time, the war spread to the west of the Jialing River in Sichuan.



MAP 4.1. The Battle for Western Sichuan. Arrows show the rebel coalition's expedition to the west of the Jialing River in early 1800.

Not until 05/01/12, when he heard of the Chongqing emergency, did Kuilun redirect his expedition to Hezhou. Yet he did not seem to anticipate the rebels' crossing of the Jialing River. More concerned that the rebels in Gansu might make inroads into western Sichuan, he detailed troops to Sichuan's northern border. Frowning at Kuilun's slow action, Jiaqing nevertheless concurred with him on strengthening the defenses of the northern border. Like Kuilun, Jiaqing did not foresee a crisis in Sichuan; he insisted that Kuilun send one general to aid Hubei.[50] Kuilun learned of the crossing when he reached Linshui. He immediately asked Delengtai to hurry back and requested Guizhou to send three thousand reinforcements to Sichuan. He also sent an urgent letter to Qishiwu, asking him to come to his aid. Admitting his mismanagement and asking for punishment, Kuilun contended, however, that he had not decreased the militias along the river.[51]

The news was like a bolt out of the blue for the throne when Kuilun's memorial arrived on 05/02/01. Jiaqing spent the day tackling the crisis, issuing numerous long edicts. Although he acknowledged, reluctantly, that he and the grand councilors bore some responsibility, he upbraided Kuilun relentlessly for the debacle, claiming that his crime was even greater than that of Lebao because

the rebellion did not expand under Lebao's watch. Yet he refrained from dismissing Kuilun, citing his high character, and charged him to solve the crisis by either eliminating the rebels west of the river or driving them back to the east bank.[52] In addition to endorsing the reinforcements Kuilun had requested, Jiaqing ordered Mingliang, who was en route to Hubei, to go to Sichuan instead.[53] The most extraordinary decision Jiaqing made that day, however, was to release Lebao from jail and send him back to Sichuan as an "imperial guardsman wearing blue feathers" (*lanling shiwei*). Jiaqing declared that Lebao was not guilty of corruption and that his wrongdoings—procrastination and inaction—were outweighed by his contributions in the Miao campaign and his capture of Wang Sanhuai.[54]

Lebao's return virtually doomed Kuilun, whose predicament had already worsened because of the escalation of his conflict with Guwanghing. A week before he heard of the crisis in Sichuan, Jiaqing had decided to keep Guwanghing in Sichuan to help Tojin with logistics, because he was convinced of Guwanghing's trustworthiness after having received his self-defense and more exposés on war-front corruption.[55] In the wake of the Jialing River crossing, Guwanghing submitted one memorial after another mercilessly criticizing Kuilun for his slow movements and his failure to prevent the crossing. On his way to the frontline, Kuilun had to fight back. He accused his opponent of being excessively stringent in handling logistics and told the emperor that Guwanghing had demanded his governor-general's arrow (*lingjian*), the token of the position, before the former left Dazhou, a transgression in Kuilun's view. Kuilun proposed that the Ministry of Punishment prosecute and severely penalize Guwanghing. Irritated by the heated bickering between the two in the middle of the crisis, Jiaqing reproached both but was harder on Kuilun.[56]

Having crossed the Jialing River, the rebels moved north toward Gansu. But they first rounded up local residents, while recruiting Guolu bandits and other willing candidates. When local elites organized militias and resisted, the insurgents responded with killing and burning, leaving a shambles along their way.[57] On 05/01/23, they attacked, but failed to take, the seat of Pengxi, guarded only by a small garrison and its city walls under repair. Five days after, Kuilun arrived at the city amid ruins and unburied bodies. He set up his makeshift headquarters near the Fu River (referred to as the "Tong River" at the time), the second barrier after the Jialing River on the way to the Chengdu plain, and detailed Zhu Shedou, Ahabao, and Besiyang to pursue the enemy to the north.[58] On 05/01/29, Zhu Shedou and Ahabao caught up with Ran Tianyuan at Xichong's Gaoyuanchang. Since Besiyang had pursued a rebel detachment in another direction, Zhu and Ahabao had only two thousand troops.

Having a bigger force and holding high points, Ran nearly annihilated his enemy and killed Zhu Shedou and a dozen Qing officers, but Ahabao escaped, the third time he had survived a deadly battle in this campaign.[59]

Then the rebel coalition, now swelling allegedly to thirty to forty thousand people, moved northward, lingering in Xichong, Yanting, and Nanbu between the Jialing River and the Fu River. Having lost Zhu Shedou and his force, Kuilun was able to do no more than to send dispatches to harass his enemy. Relaxed and complacent, the insurgents even celebrated Ran Tianyuan's birthday with operas and a drinking party in Xichong.[60] Nevertheless, sandwiched between the two rivers and with Delengtai coming from the north, they were in a precarious situation, the only way out being to cross the Fu River. All their scouts' crossing attempts were unsuccessful, however. Kuilun had worked carefully on river defense. He had set up numerous checkpoints along the long river; he had recruited militiamen by raising their pay; he had had Liu Qing lead six hundred regular troops to patrol from one checkpoint to another; and he had deployed 3,600 Tibetan and Jinchuan soldiers from western Sichuan.[61] He was also waiting for Qishiwu's arrival. However, citing his relapsed leg injury, Qishiwu, carried in a bamboo chair, moved slowly.[62]

Reminiscent of what the Yongzheng emperor did when he heard of Furdan's disastrous defeat by the Zunghar Mongols in 1731—he comforted, in lieu of reproaching, Furdan, one of the commanders of the Qing forces in the Zunghar war, and enclosed his own belt to remind Furdan of his responsibility so that he would not commit suicide[63]—Jiaqing, on hearing of Zhu Shedou's death, restrained himself from upbraiding Kuilun too harshly for fear that Kuilun might commit suicide. He allowed Kuilun to pause and wait for the reinforcements and ordered Guizhou to send another two thousand troops to Sichuan.[64] However, Jiaqing's low-key reaction was not a pardon of Kuilun. He lodged his hopes in Lebao, repeatedly urging Lebao to hurry to Sichuan and charging him with annihilating the rebels between the two rivers. On 05/02/20, he named Lebao Sichuan's acting governor-general and granted him the trappings of the third rank. He also gave Lebao the authority to investigate several problematic generals in Sichuan, Ahabao, Qishiwu, and Adisi.[65] Kuilun was thus placed in an increasingly awkward and difficult situation.

THE REFORMERS ARE PHASED OUT

The Jialing River debacle virtually upended the Jiaqing emperor's spirited but tottering war-front reform. For Jiaqing, the military disasters confirmed his growing doubts about the new leaders he had

sent to the front. By reinstating Lebao, he was ready to make a turn. But the retreat was staged first as an offensive. On 05/02/24, Jiaqing revisited several closed cases and rendered new punishments to some of the commanders and viceroys who had been cashiered and penalized. He stripped Ingšan of his concurrent position of vice minister of personnel, dismissed Yimian from his current positions of consultant at Uliastai and guardsman of the third rank, and exiled Yimian and Qin Cheng'en to Ili. Among other things, those new disciplinary actions were meant to send a warning to the current leaders of the campaign. Clearly defining their responsibility (he put Eldemboo and Nayancheng in charge of the campaign in Gansu; Taibu in Shaanxi; Delengtai, Kuilun, and Lebao in Sichuan; and Songyun, Mingliang, and Wesibu in Hubei), Jiaqing charged them with clearing out rebels within their own jurisdictions and preventing the rebels from leaving or entering.[66] Although both the old guard and the 1799 cohorts were on the slate then, the new leaders soon fell out of favor one after the other in the months to come. By the middle of 1800, Jiaqing had completed a return to the old lineup.

Songyun Is Banished

Conscientious and able, Songyun was among the first people to be appointed to a key position after Hešen's purge. Once in Shaanxi, Songyun had been mindful of the causes and composition of the rebellion and looked for a fundamental solution. Unlike other frontline leaders who invariably depicted a dark picture of the campaign, Songyun saw the rebels as non-life-threatening to the dynasty, given their weak leadership and scant potential, save for their mountain trekking skills, though he sometimes might have underestimated their resilience. Songyun did not ask for reinforcements in Shaanxi and was more inclined to use Salar Muslim soldiers and Alashan Mongol cavalrymen, which was more cost-effective than deploying regular troops from afar.[67] Having been at the front for several months, Songyun seemed to be convinced that social ills were more important than sectarian belief in keeping the rebellion alive, as the rebels constantly coopted marginals and bandits, especially from Sichuan, where those elements were plentiful, and thus were able to regroup following each defeat. In view of this, he suggested lifting the bans on illegal salt trade and counterfeiting of coins in Sichuan so that salt smugglers and counterfeiters would not be pressed to join the rebellion. However, Jiaqing was immensely disturbed by this proposal, deeming it absurd and offensive, so much so that he used grand councilors to draft the edict to criticize Songyun instead of letting secretaries do it.[68]

This incident cost Songyun his good impression with the throne.

Afterward, Songyun had often been found at fault. Late in 1799, when he tried to extend the service of the Salar soldiers in Shaanxi, he was harshly criticized by Jiaqing. When Songyun was ordered to interrogate Yongbao, Mingliang, and Qingcheng following their dismissals, Songyun's forgiving attitude toward Mingliang and Qingcheng again enraged Jiaqing.[69] As 1799 neared its end, Jiaqing had completely lost his trust in Songyun. He deprived him of his honorific titles and feather trappings in addition to a "severe reprimand." Only because he could not find the right person to replace him did he keep Songyun in his position.[70] Frequently, Jiaqing disparaged Songyun along with Nayancheng, even though the two had never become close. Probably uneasy with Nayancheng's upstart pretensions, Songyun had tried to keep a distance from him, which then prompted Jiaqing to blame Songyun for never mentioning Nayancheng's whereabouts and operations in his memorials.[71]

Despite all the criticism that he had to endure, Songyun persevered in his opinions on the reasons for the persistence of the rebellion. Having failed to convince the emperor through correspondence, he wanted to present his views in person. In early 1800, Songyun requested a short leave of absence to go to the capital to meet with the emperor.[72] However, on the day Songyun wrote this memorial, 05/01/08, Jiaqing dismissed him from the governor-general position and appointed him the Ili general. Then, ten days later, Jiaqing ordered Songyun to go to Hubei to act as governor-general of Huguang, as the situation in Hubei seemed to be deteriorating. Although both Taibu and Changlin, who succeeded Songyun, requested that Songyun remain in Shaanxi, Jiaqing did not agree.[73] During his nearly ten months' tenure in Shaanxi, Songyun, having realized early that it was impossible to root out malfeasances in war finances without jeopardizing many people's vested interests, chose not to play hardball, thus avoiding a tense relationship with the other leaders in Shaanxi. Yet he had failed to please the emperor.

Right after Songyun reached Xiangyang at the beginning of the second month, the reinstated Mingliang, who had been redirected to Hubei, also arrived. Shortly before, Hongfeng, the Jingzhou general, and Jiang Sheng, the new governor-general of Huguang, arrived one after the other, each bringing one thousand troops.[74] With Mingliang anchoring the operations in Hubei and Jiang Sheng taking up his post, Songyun might have thought that his own presence was no longer necessary. Late in the third month, he handed his troops over to Mingliang and Wesibu, and requested to go to Beijing, complaining that he felt weak after an illness. But he also said that he wanted to report in person on the campaign as well as conditions in the battleground provinces. This time Jiaqing agreed to allow him to

return to Beijing.[75]

In a series of audiences in several days in the intercalary month following the fourth month, Songyun again presented his proposal of lifting the bans on salt smuggling and illicit minting in Sichuan and setting up customs stations to levy taxes on the businesses. He had written a memorial detailing his ideas, which he submitted in person. Jiaqing was again infuriated. He argued that it was the dynasty's established law not to allow the private sector to be engaged in the two vital businesses, and this he could not alter. He also pointed out that the lifting of the ban on illicit minting in Sichuan would lead other provinces to follow suit, causing great chaos in the economic sphere. Not pleased with Songyun's persistence in his views, Jiaqing declined Songyun's request to return to the campaign. Having demoted his position from Ili general to vice commander-in-chief, Jiaqing sent Songyun to Xinjiang with the lowest banner title, "company leader" (*lingdui dachen*).[76] Although Songyun was not legally punished, going to remote Xinjiang amounted to banishment; he would have to stay there for nearly a decade.[77]

Kuilun Is Granted Suicide

Yet Songyun fared much better than Kuilun, who did not survive the year. On 05/02/03, two days after he received the news of the crossing and reinstated Lebao, Jiaqing ordered Delengtai to hurry back to Sichuan and to lead the campaign there.[78] Although he blamed Delengtai for the Jialing River debacle, Jiaqing had to lean on this capable general, hoping that he could annihilate Ran Tianyuan's coalition between the two rivers. Given Delengtai's streak of deliberately stalling and not wiping out any rebel band, Jiaqing promised him a higher noble rank while threatening him with severe punishment.[79] With his military commandership given to Delengtai, Kuilun was totally sidelined.

Returning to Sichuan amid incessant alarms, Delengtai was confident, knowing that his enemy, sandwiched by the two rivers, was not in an advantageous position. He told the local officials waiting for his arrival to moor all boats by cities and towns but to allow the rebels to wander in the places they had been.[80] After reaching Guangyuan on 05/02/18, Delengtai moved southward quickly and encountered Ran Tianyuan on 05/02/24 in Jiangyou. In the middle of the battle, Ran lured Delengtai to Xindianzi, at which Ran had arranged an ambush. Assaulted by Ran's men who held high points, Delengtai's force suffered heavy casualties, more than one hundred soldiers and scores of officers being either killed or injured, although Ran also lost many men, including his younger brother and Chen Defeng, who was captured; Ran himself was injured on his right palm. After the battle,

Delengtai paused and asked Kuilun for reinforcements.[81]

When Delengtai received nearly five thousand troops from Kuilun, including the three hundred Solon soldiers, he waged a series of battles in Jiangyou early in the third month. Ran Tianyuan kept his force on the move and repeatedly used his favorite ambush tactics. However, he was crushed by Delengtai at Matigang on 05/03/06; Ran was caught after both of his legs were seriously injured.[82] A gifted rebel commander, the thirty-six-year-old Ran Tianyuan remained defiant in his captivity. He was escorted to Chengdu and executed there by "a thousand cuts."[83]

The remainder of the rebel coalition, still in the thousands, withdrew to Jianzhou and holed up at Shimenzhai, a huge fort built by local residents. On 05/03/13, Delengtai came and broke into the fort, killing hundreds and capturing more, including Chen Defeng's wife, who had joined the fight clad in white and holding a big banner with the slogan "Revenge my husband" (*Tifubaochou*). However, most insurgents and many of their families escaped by crawling down cliffs. It is likely that Delengtai did not intend to eliminate them all at once.[84]

Delengtai had effectively broken the coalition's backbone. As usual, Delengtai's victory was accompanied by a bloodbath. In addition to thousands killed on the battlefield, Delengtai liberally slaughtered the captives, routinely using "death by a thousand cuts" and other cruel means of killing.[85] Not bothered by his atrocities, Jiaqing was overjoyed at Delengtai's speedy progress. Following each of the battle reports from Delengtai, Jiaqing lavished on him and his subordinates numerous gifts, promotions, and extra stipends. He upgraded Delengtai's noble rank from baron of the second grade to viscount of the third grade and allowed Delengtai to act as Sichuan's provincial military commander since Qishiwu had been dismissed for his delays.[86]

Nevertheless, Delengtai abruptly halted his triumphant march. He reported that more than ten thousand insurgents and their families had escaped from Shimenzhai and that they were close to the Fu River. However, he only detailed about two hundred scouts to trail them, saying that he was counting on Kuilun for the river defense.[87] Given what ensued, Delengtai might have deliberately allowed the insurgents a chance to cross the Fu River. But he might not have been the scheme's lone mastermind. On 05/03/12, the eve of the Shimenzhai battle, Lebao arrived in Guangyuan. It is possible that he met with Delengtai right after the battle, though neither reported it to the throne.[88]

Despite Jiaqing's repeated urging, Lebao had moved at a snail's pace to Sichuan. After arriving in Xi'an on 05/02/18, Lebao took three

weeks to reach Guangyuan; the reason he gave was that he stayed in Fengxian for days to ensure the safe passage of a war fund shipment over the plank trail. Lebao had something to gain by going slowly. He might have been waiting for Delengtai's victories, while trying to assemble a sizable military force before he hit the front.[89] However, Lebao's biggest concern should have been that Kuilun was still in Sichuan. Delengtai's recent victories helped Kuilun, for the improvements in the Sichuan theater mitigated the emperor's anger toward Kuilun. On 05/03/21, Jiaqing expressed his satisfaction with Kuilun's efforts in safeguarding the Fu River and allowed him to act as governor-general of Sichuan (but reduced his rank from the first grade to the third), intending to keep him in Sichuan to lead the river defense. Meanwhile, Jiaqing rescinded his earlier decision to allow Lebao to act as Sichuan's governor-general and appointed Lebao as Sichuan's provincial military commander (since Delengtai was acting in that position, Jiaqing made Delengtai the Chengdu general). Reducing his rank from the third to the fourth grade, Jiaqing ruled that Lebao would remain on probation for eight years.[90] Although this edict had not reached them when Lebao met with Delengtai, they would have understood the stakes of having Kuilun kept in Sichuan. The most effective way to subvert Kuilun was another crisis, the one at hand being the rebels' crossing of the Fu River, as Jiaqing had reiterated that holding the river was Kuilun's "moment of life or death."[91]

In fact, it was not difficult to materialize it. Kuilun had run short of military forces after having sent nearly five thousand troops to Delengtai and one thousand to Adisi (Kuilun obliged Adisi to fight against all the rebels in northeastern Sichuan) and left another several thousand to guard key cities such as Pengxi, Shehong, Yanting, Santai, and Zitong near the middle valley of the Fu River. In the end, he had only the militias for the river's lower valley between Mianzhou's Jinshanyi (the seat of Mianzhou subprefecture) and Shehong's Taihezhen. While Kuilun and his last thousand-odd troops stayed at Jinshanyi, he had Liu Qing take charge of the sections below. On 05/03/15, when three thousand Guizhou troops arrived at Jinshanyi, Delengtai immediately sent them to guard the city of Tongchuan. Concerned about the lower Fu valley, Kuilun nevertheless comforted himself with the thought that the rebels were far away.[92]

Taking advantage of Delengtai's pause, the surviving rebels quickly regrouped. The Blue Band upheld Ran Tianyuan's cousin, Ran Tianshi, as its new leader, and the depleted Thread Band merged with it. Zhang Zicong, the leader of the White Band, became the coalition's new commander-in-chief. Still attempting to go to Gansu, they tried to cross the Fu River.[93] Having tried unsuccessfully once—the water was

deep and the militiamen on the other bank fired on them—they moved speedily to Shehong. On the night of 05/03/18, they reached Taihezhen. About one thousand fighters selected by Zhang forded the river before dawn at Wangjiazui, a few miles north of Taihezhen, where the water was shallow from a long drought. Then they crushed the 150 militiamen at Taihezhen and seized boats. When Delengtai's scouts arrived late on 05/03/19, they caught and killed only the last batch of one-hundred-plus people waiting for a ferry on the bank. Shortly after, Liu Qing hurried in, but Delengtai did not arrive until the evening of the following day. To clear himself of responsibility while placing the blame on Kuilun, Delengtai reported that some boats had been left on the east bank.[94] No sooner did Liu Qing's report on the crossing reach Kuilun at Jinshanyi on 05/03/19 than Lebao arrived there—he might have measured his journey so as not to be found responsible for the crossing. In a brief memorial (his memorials were usually long and detailed), Lebao reported that the rebels had crossed the Fu River, and he had just arrived at the front.[95]

After their crossing of the Fu River, the fertile and affluent Chengdu plain was at the rebels' feet. Instead of going to Gansu right away, they were enticed to reap it first. The coalition split into two groups. The Blue and Yellow Bands went southeastward to Anyue and Suining, and the White Band led by Zhang Zicong headed to Zhongjiang; both targeted Chengdu. While Chengdu scrambled for defense and was settling tens of thousands of refugees from the suburbs,[96] Delengtai picked up his speed. On 05/03/22, he caught up with Zhang Zicong at Shehong's Xindianzi, allegedly killing and capturing thousands.[97] Meanwhile, Kuilun and Lebao hurried to Zhongjiang to intercept the insurgent dispatches going to several counties in the Chengdu plain.[98] But the insurgents abandoned their plan of going to Chengdu after the battle of Xindianzi and decided to return to eastern Sichuan. On the night of 05/03/27, all the rebel bands except for Zhang Zicong's group waded across the Fu River to the east at Taihezhen. Kuilun and Lebao arrived on the following morning just in time to catch their tail; they killed those in the river and on the west bank. Then Kuilun parted with Lebao and went to Longan prefecture to tackle the rebels from Gansu—both might have expected that they would meet again soon.[99]

Zhang Zicong lingered only a few more days on the Chengdu plain. Delengtai routed him in a fierce battle at Zhongjiang's Fujiahe. At the beginning of the fourth month, he and his last thousand men recrossed the Fu River and joined the other rebels on the east side. Moving north along the Jialing River, the insurgents reached Jianzhou's Jiangkou. Their scouts swam to the east shore and seized some boats to ferry them across the Jialing River to the east bank. Lebao and Delengtai, who had met the day before, reached Jiangkou on

05/04/08 in the middle of their crossing. They killed thousands and captured hundreds, most captured civilians, as well as many animals. Only a couple of thousand rebels made it to the east and then went into the mountains in Guangyuan and Nanjiang. The rebel coalition's nearly three-month excursion west of the Jialing River was the only time that the conflict spread to the Chengdu plain. The coalition's quick collapse attests that Delengtai did not take too big a risk in allowing the rebels to cross the Fu River, as their core consisted of merely several thousand people, and most of the coerced civilians quickly deserted. Pursuing the rebels to the east bank, Lebao parted with Delengtai and turned westward to Longan. He was charged by the throne to supervise the fighting against the Gao-Ma band from Gansu there and, more important, to arrest Kuilun.[100]

Kuilun's fall came as no surprise. On receiving the news on 05/03/29 that the insurgents had crossed the Fu River to the west, Jiaqing immediately dismissed Kuilin and ordered him arrested for trial. Hastily reversing his earlier praise of Kuilun's river defense effort, he now bitterly criticized him for his failure in guarding the river. Lebao was again named to act in Kuilun's position; he was also ordered to arrest and interrogate Kuilun.[101] In merely six months, Lebao and Kuilun had switched their roles as defendant and prosecutor. As if discomfited by serving as Kuilun's prosecutor, Lebao told the emperor that it was a difficult job for him: he would be criticized for trying to retaliate if he was harsh but would be criticized as protective if too lenient (he claimed that he and Kuilun were relatives but did not specify how). However, Lebao did not recuse himself. Instead, Lebao requested that Zhou Xingdai, a royal envoy sent to Shaanxi and Sichuan to offer worship to the sacred Buddhist and Daoist mountains, join him in the prosecution. A Sichuan native, Zhou also had the secret mission of collecting information about the campaign. In communication with the throne throughout his journey, Zhou must have known what he should do in the trial.[102] Despite Kuilun's plausible self-defense, Lebao and Zhou found that he was responsible for the rebels' crossings of the Jialing River and the Fu River and for Zhu Shedou's death. In addition, Zhou accused him of refusing to send reinforcements when the rebels ravaged the Mianzhou area, causing the great carnage. Lebao added that, when a deserted officer was mistakenly killed by a militia chief, Kuilun reported falsely that the officer died on the battlefield. Yet the shrewd Lebao stopped short of suggesting a penalty, saying that more witnesses were needed and he had to go to the frontline, although their findings had built a case for severe punishment.[103]

Taking over the case, the grand councilors suggested, on 05/04/27, the public execution of Kuilun in Chengdu. Jiaqing ordered Kuilun

escorted to Beijing for further interrogation, however, though he approved the death penalty.[104] Jiaqing may have needed more time to justify capital punishment, which had not been given to any ranking officials in this campaign. Yongbao and Huiling were not executed, although the damage from their "crimes" was more severe than in Kuilun's case—by this time, the rebel coalition had disintegrated, and its remainder had been driven back to the east of the Jialing River.

After Kuilun's retrial in Beijing, on 05/06/23, the grand councilors upheld the original sentence of death by execution. Concurring with them on the death penalty, Jiaqing emphasized the devastation in the two river valleys and the people's suffering. Having studied several precedents of death penalty sentences to high-ranking officials, Jiaqing chose to use the case of Yang Yingju, the governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou during the Qing Myanmar campaigns in the 1760s, as the model for Kuilun's sentence because both held the position of governor-general, both failed in leading the war to a victory after having bragged about their ability, and both cheated the throne by reporting false information (in Kuilun's case, Jiaqing referred to his false report of an officer's death). Mimicking the Qianlong emperor's decision on Yang, who was sentenced to suicide, Jiaqing amended Kuilun's verdict from execution to suicide. It was a favor—Kuilun would avoid the humiliation of being beheaded publicly and keep his corpse intact—because he had volunteered to go to the front, as the emperor pointed out.[105]

Sixteen months after the forty-nine-year-old Hešen hanged himself, the forty-eight-year-old Kuilun died in the same manner, becoming the first and the only viceroy to receive the death penalty in this long war. Unlike Hešen, who had left enormous property holdings, Kuilun had not been wealthy, having no money to redeem himself as Lebao had done when arrested. Worse than that, Kuilun still owed the state arrears of more than 102,000 taels from his tenure in Fujian. After Kuilun died, his wife submitted to the government all their property, including several houses in Beijing and personal belongings, per her husband's will. However, their total value did not cover even 10 percent of the huge arrears. Jiaqing exempted the outstanding debt and allowed Kuilun's wife to keep one house that had been occupied by the family's servants. He also ruled that Kuilun's only son, who had just been exiled to Ili as a result of Kuilun's case, could return home after three years. Once again, Jiaqing praised Kuilun's integrity, saying that Kuilun's high character played a role in his decision to reduce his penalty from execution to suicide. He added that it was beneficial for officials to be clean, since it could help reduce their punishment in the event that they were convicted.[106]

Jiaqing clearly felt a certain uneasiness over Kuilun's death. For

fear of being criticized as reckless in his treatment of high-ranking officials, Jiaqing vehemently and repeatedly defended his punishment of Kuilun, before and after his death. He argued that, since he had punished people appointed by his father, such as Mingliang and Lebao, he could not be partial to Kuilun, whom he had appointed. More important, he tried, through Kuilun's case, to enhance his persona as a resolute monarch on a par with his strong-willed forefathers, capable of rendering severe punishment to people of high status.[107] In this vein, Kuilun was sacrificed not only for the "crimes" he had committed but also to meet Jiaqing's need for political theater. The reason that Jiaqing picked the upright Kuilun in lieu of others was also because, as Jiaqing stated more than once, Kuilun was not close to him, so it was easier to dispense with him.[108]

Kuilun's death was also meant as a warning to the campaign leadership. Jiaqing immediately informed Eldemboo, Delengtai, Mingliang, and all the viceroys of the final verdict to Kuilun. He exhorted them to complete the campaign by a new deadline—between the autumn and the winter—so that they would not be penalized as Kuilun had been.[109] However, Kuilun's death in fact helped relieve Delengtai and Eldemboo of responsibility for the debacle in Sichuan. Knowing clearly that Eldemboo's and Delengtai's pulling out of Sichuan was a critical factor in the rebels' crossing of the Jialing River, Jiaqing had reproached both repeatedly, putting Eldemboo on the defensive.[110] With the scapegoat dead, the case was dropped. As for the crossing of the Fu River, Jiaqing chose not to blame Delengtai, saying that his loosening of the reins following the battle of Shimenzhai had occurred because he had to chase the scattered rebels. Elated by Delengtai's initial successes—he had raised his noble rank from the third grade of viscount to the first grade and formalized his position as Chengdu general—Jiaqing tried not to set himself against Delengtai, who could be effective in the battlefield. However, he soon turned wary of the relapse of Delengtai's old habit of leaving the insurgents unfinished, particularly his failure to eliminate the remainder of the rebel coalition before it crossed the Jialing River to the east bank, and he became less excited by Delengtai's new "victories."[111]

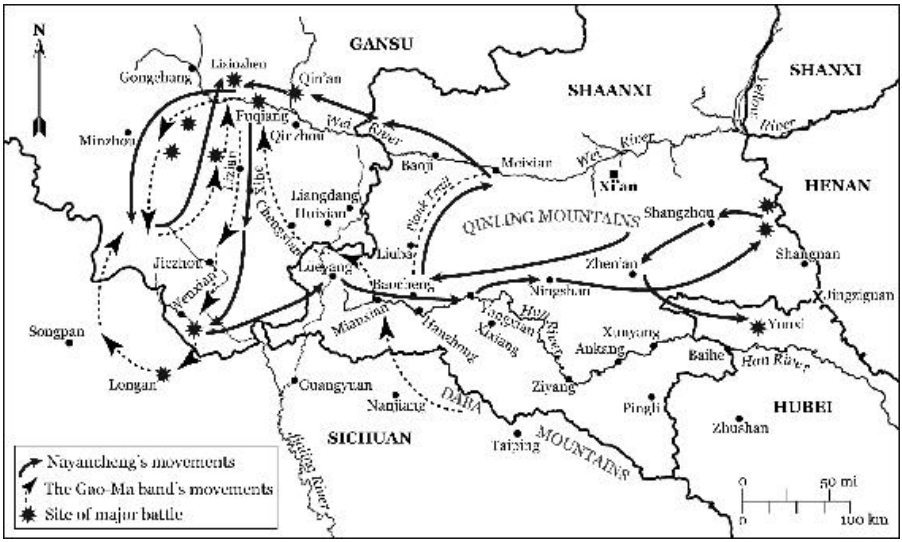
Having neither money nor personal ties with the emperor, Kuilun seemed fit to be sacrificed. In addition, his principled character and forthright temperament had made him many enemies. Therefore, few regretted his death.[112] Only Xu Jing, Kuilun's Chinese friend and a scholar, expressed faint sympathy in a poem. Xu Jing compared Kuilun to Fang Guan, a chancellor of the Tang dynasty who suffered an utter fiasco, losing all his troops, when Fang asked to lead an army to recover the capital city during the An Lushan Rebellion. However,

Du Fu, the poet and Fang's friend, pleaded for Fang's pardon, and Fang was not punished. Lamenting that he himself was no Du Fu, Xu Jing could only hope that Kuilun would redeem himself by transposing his soul into a ghost and killing off the rebels:

> Billowy is the water in the Tong River,
> Their horses drinking at the river,
> The bandits are triumphant;
> The imperial forces do not reach the river in time,
> Desperately the elderly and the young yell for help;
> The water turns red,
> Their dead bodies flow away with it.
>
> Bestowed with such great imperial favor,
> How can he avoid being responsible for his crime?
> Turning into a fierce ghost, taking up knife and bow,
> To repay Heaven above and
> To stem surging tides down on earth;
> Wiping out the bandits, blood sullies his battle gown;
> Having nowhere to run,
> The bandits are killed like feathers being burned.[113]

Nayancheng Is Disgraced

By the time of Kuilun's death in the late summer, 1800, Nayancheng, the royal commissioner with the prospect of filling the void left by Hešen, had fallen.[114] Since his arrival in Shaanxi, Nayancheng had been unable to finish off hundreds of Zhang Hanchao's remnants but refused to pull out from the Qinling Mountains despite the emperor's numerous orders. Early in the first month, on learning that Gansu had been invaded by the Gao-Ma band, the Dai Family Regiment, and other bands of Xiangyang origin, Jiaqing immediately ordered Nayancheng to rush there. But Zhang's last men had left the forest by that time and went rapidly to Shaanxi's borders with Henan and Hubei. Nayancheng claimed that his troops drove them out, but Jiaqing doubted it, thinking that they had run out of supplies. The battle to turn the rebels back from the borders did not go smoothly. Not until Jiaqing gave him another "severe reprimand" did Nayancheng and others manage to force the rebels to turn away from the Henan and Hubei borders. Again Nayancheng was urged to hurry to Gansu and given three months to complete the campaign there. Leaving five thousand Green Standard troops in Shaanxi, Nayancheng led away all the bannermen. Hengšui, his father-in-law, went with him to Gansu.[115] (Map 4.2.)



MAP 4.2. Nayancheng in the War in 1800. Arrows show Nayancheng's campaigns in Gansu and Shaanxi; another set of arrows shows the movements of the Gao-Ma band.

In Gansu, the insurgents had been wandering in Chengxian, Qinzhou, Lixian, and Fuqiang, but they had been checked and assailed by the Gansu forces.[116] Late in the first month, Nayancheng and Hengšui entered Gansu from Baoji (they had pursued a large rebel dispatch through the plank trail) and soon had two victories against Yang Kaijia's band of over ten thousand, most of them kidnaped civilians, first at Qin'an's Longshanzhen and then at Fuqiang's Xiujinzhen. During the second battle, Delengtai arrived and helped crush the rebels. For the first time since Nayancheng had joined the campaign, Jiaqing praised Nayancheng profusely and rewarded his troops with a one-month stipend. Because of the Jialing River debacle, Jiaqing ordered Delengtai to return to Sichuan and charged Nayancheng and Hengšui with exterminating the rebels in Gansu before the summer.[117]

Meanwhile, Eldemboo had been moving slowly to the front. Not until 05/02/09, more than one month after he set out from Dazhou, did Eldemboo arrive in Qinzhou and join Nayancheng. Jiaqing was annoyed but instantly forgave him when he learned that Eldemboo's illness had relapsed.[118] Eldemboo might indeed have been sick, but it was also likely that he was not keen to cooperate with Nayancheng. In fact, Jiaqing had repeatedly warned Nayancheng not to be arrogant and unwilling to obey Eldemboo. Although Nayancheng had reiterated that they were on good terms—when he was a child, Nayancheng had befriended Eldemboo, who was then a palace guardsman in Beijing—

Jiaqing was skeptical: “Friendship from a time of being poor and humble might not last when people become wealthy and noble.”[119] Indeed, Nayancheng, a high flier now, could hardly contain his haughtiness. After his first victory in Gansu, he demanded a new title, “grand minster consultant,” which would make him a deputy to Eldemboo. Jiaqing agreed but was not impressed. After the two joined forces, Jiaqing instructed Nayancheng to lead all the troops in Gansu, including Eldemboo’s, because Eldemboo was sick. However, Jiaqing did not allow Nayancheng to act in Eldemboo’s position.[120]

They collaborated only briefly, however. Despite the emperor’s order, Eldemboo did not yield the reins of his troops to Nayancheng, and he soon returned to the frontline himself. Late in the second month, reinforced with 2,300 Gansu troops led by Guwangheo, the superior Qing forces overpowered the Gao-Ma band and other groups that had crossed the Wei River to its south bank in several battles in Minzhou and Lixian, killing and capturing thousands. Then Eldemboo and Nayancheng thwarted the Gao-Ma band’s attempt to reach Sichuan’s Songpan, forcing it to turn northward, and routed it at Lixinzhen before the second month ended.[121] After this battle, Eldemboo parted with Nayancheng, leading his four thousand troops to Qinzhou, while Nayancheng and Qingcheng, who had rejoined the campaign as ordered by the emperor, pursued the Gao-Ma band southward.[122] It is likely that Eldemboo and Nayancheng had had a conflict centered on Nayancheng’s bannermen. Having long thought that Nayancheng possessed too big a force, Jiaqing had instructed Eldemboo to obtain one thousand Jilin bannermen from Nayancheng instead of deploying more bannermen.[123] When Nayancheng set out for Gansu, Jiaqing had also told him to discuss with Eldemboo how to divide the troops between them. Nayancheng likely refused to give any to Eldemboo. As a result, both requested reinforcements, but Jiaqing did not think it necessary.[124]

The departure of the crack Qing forces for Gansu left Shaanxi vulnerable. Led by Wu Jinzhu, a veteran rebel of Xiangyang, several rebel groups from Sichuan that had crossed the Han River late in the first month merged and became the Wu Family Regiment (Wujiaying). Failing to reach Hubei, the band loitered in Zhen’an and Xunyang, allegedly securing twenty to thirty thousand people by recruiting local sectarians and coercing others. In a battle at Xunyang’s Sanchahe in the second month, the band nearly annihilated a Qing force of two thousand and killed its leader, a regional commander.[125] South of the Han River, rebel groups led by Gou Wenming, Xian Dachuan, Long Shaozhou, and Tang Daxin tried repeatedly to break into Xing’an from Sichuan. To prevent them from crossing the river, several officers and Shaanxi provincial officials were stationed in Ziyang and Ankang. In

the mid-third month, thousands of insurgents, including the Dai Family Regiment, Zhang Shilong, Zhang Tianlun, Yang Kaijia, and Xin Cong, returned from Gansu to Shaanxi owing to Qing military pressure and the scant resources in Gansu. Responding to Shaanxi's desperate pleas for reinforcements, Jiaqing first directed Hengšui to lead his 2,400 men back to Shaanxi,[126] and then he instructed Eldemboo to return to Shaanxi and Nayancheng to stay in Gansu to finish off the Gao-Ma band, the only rebel group in Gansu that had been stymied in the province's inhospitable southeastern corner.[127]

Nayancheng and Qingcheng chased the Gao-Ma band of more than four thousand toward Wenxian through snow-covered mountains. Some of the insurgents hanged themselves or jumped into rivers in despair. On 05/03/16, Nayancheng caught up with the rebels who were besieging Kalangzhai, a huge fort sheltering ten thousand civilians, and crushed them, killing and capturing nearly two thousand in addition to many deaths from stampeding and falling from cliffs. But about one thousand ran away, disappearing into the forest on the border with Sichuan and subsequently penetrating Sichuan's Longan prefecture. However, Nayancheng requested that Besiyang, who had been stationed in Longan, tackle the rebels and asked to return to Shaanxi himself. Reluctantly, Jiaqing agreed, while fuming at Nayancheng's not wiping out this band. Hence, he did not grant any reward to Nayancheng for having cleared Gansu of insurgents.[128]

Eldemboo was already on his way back to Shaanxi when Jiaqing ordered him there. When he heard of Nayancheng's Kalangzhai battle, Eldemboo expressed in a memorial his concern over the Gao-Ma band's going to Sichuan, apparently a complaint in disguise about Nayancheng's unfinished job.[129] However, Eldemboo himself came under severe and continuous criticism. Dismayed by Eldemboo's failure to end the campaign more than half a year after becoming commander-in-chief—the situation in both Sichuan and Shaanxi had deteriorated steeply, in fact—Jiaqing doubted Eldemboo's ability to lead the campaign, despite his unwavering trust in his character. He also relentlessly and repeatedly scolded other Shaanxi leaders. Through his secret sources, Jiaqing knew that the returned insurgents from Gansu had gone into the Qinling Mountains and taken critical points, looting and kidnaping civilians and interrupting commercial and official traffic, but none of the generals and officials in Shaanxi had fought a single battle. He ordered Eldemboo to investigate those involved, threatening them with disciplinary action. He also set up a new, albeit unrealistic, deadline: to clear Shaanxi of all the rebels before the end of the fourth month. Perhaps aware of the tension between Eldemboo and Nayancheng, he instructed Nayancheng to go to northern Sichuan.[130]

Returning to Shaanxi, Nayancheng met with Eldemboo in Yangxian on 05/04/10. Eldemboo might have made a request for some of Nayancheng's bannermen at this time, since Jiaqing had again told Eldemboo to get one or two thousand bannermen from Nayancheng. Counting on receiving them, Eldemboo had turned down Jiaqing's offer to transfer three thousand Guizhou troops from Sichuan. However, Nayancheng apparently did not comply. As on the previous occasion, the two ended up requesting reinforcements. Contending that they had fewer than five thousand functional troops, excluding invalids and the incompetent, to deal with a dozen groups of rebels, they demanded thirteen thousand reinforcements, planning to form five divisions for exterminating rebels in Shaanxi.[131] Annoyed by their request, which countered his recent inclination to use more militiamen instead of regulars, Jiaqing nevertheless agreed to send six thousand troops to Shaanxi and two thousand to Henan, for he was greatly worried that Eldemboo's and Nayancheng's presence in southern Shaanxi would press the insurgents to Henan. Harshly reprimanding the two for their lack of concern about Henan, he rescinded his decision that Nayancheng go to Sichuan and sternly cautioned the two to spare no effort to safeguard Henan. Meanwhile, Jiaqing told Wu Xiongguang to strengthen Henan's border defense, for which he was even willing to provide some funds.[132]

In fact, Wu Xiongguang had kept alerting the throne to rebel movements in Shaanxi that indicated their intent of going to Henan.[133] Indeed, several bands started moving eastward to Shangzhou late in the third month, clashing with the Qing border garrisons. Probably in order to distract the Qing forces, the Wu Family Regiment sent dispatches and attacked the seats of Ankang and Xunyang counties, though both attempts failed. Deeming the rebels' going to Henan a major setback, since it would be easier for the insurgents to acquire supplies and new blood in affluent and populous Henan—Jiaqing would have preferred for them to go to either northeastern Sichuan or Gansu[134]—Jiaqing distraughtly orchestrated Henan's defense, ordering more reinforcements to Henan. Meanwhile, he intensified his criticism of the leaders of Shaanxi. In addition to giving each of them a "severe reprimand," he deprived Eldemboo, Nayancheng, Changlin, and Taibu of their feather trappings.[135] Under mounting pressure from the emperor, Eldemboo, Nayancheng, and Hengšui hurried to Shaanxi's southeastern corner, while Wu Xiongguang rushed to Jingziguan, and his troops even crossed the border to Luonan and Shangnan. After Eldemboo routed Yang Kaijia and others in two battles near the border at the end of the fourth month, the rebels turned away from the border with Henan.[136]

No sooner had the Henan crisis been resolved than Hubei was in

danger. After their unsuccessful forays to Henan, the insurgents adopted a new strategy. A coalesced group went westward into the Qinling Mountains, led by Ran Xuesheng, a Xiangyang rebel nicknamed “Black-Eye-Socket Marshal” (Qingyanwo Yuanshuai), who had emerged as the leader of Zhang Hanchao’s remnants. Meanwhile, Yang Kaijia, Xin Cong, and Zhang Tianlun broke into Hubei at Yunxi early in the intercalary month when the militiamen guarding the checkpoints returned home for the harvest. Then the Wu Family Regiment also turned in that direction. Apparently, they intended to make a detour to Henan. Hengšui rushed there first but suffered a defeat, losing hundreds of troops, though the rebels’ casualties were not much lighter.[137] Days later, Eldemboo and Nayancheng led their massive forces and entered Hubei after meeting in Zhen’an.[138] That the rebels seemed to have outmaneuvered his commanders infuriated Jiaqing. In a long edict dated 05/inter04/15, he accused the commanders of not having laid out an overall strategy and vented his frustration at directing the campaign from the capital. Having lost his confidence in Nayancheng, he called off his mission, ordering Nayancheng to hand over all his troops to Eldemboo and return to the capital.[139]

Jiaqing’s ill feelings toward Nayancheng had been aggravated by the alarm from Sichuan: after the Gao-Ma band had penetrated Longan and Songpan, it expanded its size and posed a threat to Chengdu. Repeatedly condemning Nayancheng, Jiaqing reduced the records of merit Nayancheng had earned while fighting against the Gao-Ma band in Gansu. Even when hearing that Nayancheng had fought an all-day battle against the Wu Family Regiment in Hubei, killing hundreds and seriously injuring Wu Jinzhu, he did not grant any reward to him or his troops.[140] Soon after he ordered Nayancheng’s return came the last straw that crushed Jiaqing’s remaining hope for Nayancheng: Shi Jin and several other officers were killed when fighting the Gao-Ma band in Longan. In another spasm of harsh denouncements of Nayancheng, Jiaqing blamed him for Shi Jin’s death because he had not wiped out the Gao-Ma band and again criticized him for lingering in the Qinling Mountains, giving the rebels the opportunity to go to Gansu. Moreover, he accused Nayancheng of trying to compete with Eldemboo by returning from Gansu prematurely. Jiaqing deprived Nayancheng of most of his numerous titles and positions as well as the privilege of riding horses inside the Forbidden City. Yet he left Nayancheng in three positions, because he was reluctant to remove all of Agūi’s offspring from high rank—he had just cashiered Adisi, Nayancheng’s uncle, and exiled him to Xinjiang.[141]

When he received the order calling him back to the capital,

Nayancheng did not request to stay at the front, as Jiaqing had expected. He immediately packed and set out homebound from Yunxi. He returned to Beijing late in the fifth month, ten months after he had left. For several days, Jiaqing met with him, hoping to hear from Nayancheng a convincing self-defense that would give the emperor some excuse to salvage him from total downfall. However, overwhelmed by his pessimism about the campaign and his own calamity, Nayancheng did not offer any useful analysis or ideas about the campaign. Instead, he was negative, uninterested, and, at times, disoriented. He told the emperor that the rebels were like locusts that were too numerous and too hard for human beings to wipe out and that the rebellion was a predestined doom; if the doom had not run its course, even the most brilliant generals could not do much. When Jiaqing told him of the victories Eldemboo had achieved immediately after he had left, Nayancheng shrugged it off in disbelief. The emperor was not pleased.[142] Jiaqing took away Nayancheng's last three positions, but being Agūi's grandson saved him from exile to Xinjiang. Reduced to being merely a member of the Hanlin Academy, Nayancheng returned to where he had started a decade earlier.[143] More significant than his personal tragedy, Nayancheng's fall forced Jiaqing to give up his plan to fill Hešen's void with his own protégé, thus terminating the practice of relying on one leading grand councilor and opening the door to a more oligarchical way of managing the Grand Council.

Guwanghing and Tojin Are Called Back

Two weeks after Jiaqing terminated Nayancheng's mission, he called back Guwanghing and Tojin at the end of the intercalary fourth month. Late in the first month, shortly before he heard of the rebels' crossing of the Jialing River, Jiaqing had ordered that Guwanghing be kept in Sichuan to join Tojin in managing logistics. But the bellicose Guwanghing had since continued his relentless attacks on Kuilun, ignoring Jiaqing's exhortations to exercise restraint in his relationship with the latter. Even Kuilun's gesture of good will—Kuilun had petitioned to let Guwanghing stay in his position until Tojin's arrival—had failed to produce a truce. Finally, the emperor became annoyed; he had suspended Guwanghing's responsibility in the second month but kept him in Dazhou awaiting further directions.[144]

When Tojin arrived in Dazhou in the middle of the crisis in western Sichuan, there had been little enthusiasm left for war finance reform. A censor in his mid-forties, Tojin took a pragmatic approach when it came to whittling down expenses. Although he was adamant in reining in the claims made by local officials, he was not as stern as Guwanghing had been toward the army commanders. Initially, Tojin

was confident about the Sichuan theater's financial situation. Late in the third month, he estimated that the funds he had in hand plus those en route to Sichuan could last for a few months, by which time he believed the campaign would have ended.[145] Nevertheless, he changed his view in just a few weeks, complaining about the hefty expenditures by the military, the militias, and logistical personnel, and becoming concerned that there would not be sufficient funds for the coming month. Therefore, he requested more funds from the central government. Irritated, Jiaqing ordered both Tojin and Guwanghing to return to Beijing, criticizing Tojin for having no plan and Guwanghing for being apt to making trouble. To justify his decision, he said that since there was no logistical commissioner in either Hubei or Shaanxi, Sichuan did not need to be special. In the meantime, Jiaqing named Lebao, in his capacity as Sichuan's acting governor-general, to supervise logistics and select and appoint local officials to head the logistical bureau in Dazhou.[146]

It is likely that the emperor had been hearing rumors to Tojin's discredit. Furthermore, Tojin's request for money came at the wrong time. By 1800, the Qing state was struggling to regain financial balance after having sustained huge deficits for several years. While all governmental sectors had been mobilized to either generate more income or exercise austerity, Jiaqing was looking for ways to support the enormously expensive suppression campaign. Although he knew that both Lebao and Delengtai were big spenders who would not change their spending patterns easily, Jiaqing made a drastic move. In an edict on 05/inter04/28 to Lebao and Delengtai on his giving the reins of logistics to Lebao, he ordered them to send the invalid soldiers back to their home provinces, keeping only a few thousand crack troops, and to use fewer hired militiamen while recruiting more volunteer militiamen. He allotted 400,000 taels for the Sichuan theater from the treasuries of both the Ministry of Revenue and the Imperial Household Department and told the two that, after this sum, Beijing would no longer give them any money and that Lebao should use Sichuan's own funds to pay for the campaign thereafter. As Jiaqing reasoned, the rebellion had started because of the local officials' corruption and mismanagement; thus, it was local officials' responsibility to put down the rebellion with provincial funds. Only when they had failed to do their job, allowing the rebellion to escalate, affecting other provinces, did the central government have to become involved and take up the fiscal burden. However, as the emperor lamented, this turned into a great opportunity for war leaders to enrich themselves, which led to the exhaustion of the coffers of the central government as the rebellion kept expanding.[147]

There is much truth in Jiaqing's take on the dynamics of the ill-

conducted campaign. Indeed, the state's overgenerous financial support had whetted war leaders' appetites for more and more funds, discouraging them to end the operations quickly. Despite Jiaqing's threat to sever the cash pipeline, it was unlikely that the state would be able to disown this campaign, especially when Lebao returned to supervise logistics in Sichuan. Lebao was soon on his way to undoing the reform and restoring the old order. At first, he and Delengtai tried to bring back Shi Zuorui, the former logistical tsar who had been dismissed and arrested by Kuilun. As Kuilun had not found sufficient evidence to convict him, Jiaqing released Shi and returned his confiscated property and belongings. On his return to Sichuan, Delengtai had asked Kuilun to send Shi to manage his army's logistics. Then Delengtai petitioned the emperor to reinstate Shi to his former position and rank, praising him as being diligent, experienced, and efficient, particularly in resettling refugees and interrogating captives. But Jiaqing only allowed Shi to serve in the war as a dismissed official, deferring the granting of any favor until the conclusion of the campaign.[148] Lebao and Delengtai made the request again two weeks later. In addition to their earlier praise, they stressed that Shi had been wrongly accused by Kuilun, as believed by "all the officials and people in the province." Still hesitant, Jiaqing nevertheless reinstated Shi as a circuit intendant, which paved the way for Shi Zuorui to resume his former position as logistical tsar in Sichuan, again under Lebao's auspices.[149]

More Disciplinary Actions

When the Jiaqing emperor once again exercised his imperium against leading war leaders—this time he targeted his own appointees—he also rendered punishment to a host of lower-ranking officers and officials in the campaign. In the third month, Jilantai, the sixty-eight-year-old regional commander of Ningxia, and Changheng, a circuit intendant in Shaanxi, were dismissed for their failure to prevent the Gao-Ma band from invading Gansu at the beginning of the year, despite pleas on their behalf from Eldemboo and Nayancheng.[150] In the same month, Jiaqing dismissed two commanders in Sichuan, Qishiwu and Adisi. Calling the two "a pair of idiots," Jiaqing repeatedly and relentlessly criticized them for their slow response to the crises in western Sichuan. Whereas Qishiwu's act might have been deliberate, given his bitter resentment at the reforms, Adisi was simply unfit for his position; even his father, Agūi, had once said that Adisi should never serve in positions outside of the capital. Ever since his arrival in Sichuan late in 1799, Adisi had stayed idle in Daning, where there were few hostilities at the time. After he received Kuilun's letter informing him of the rebels' Jialing River crossing, Adisi had

delayed for weeks before setting out. Then he resigned when he reached Chongqing in the late third month, citing his disabled left leg. If Nayancheng's sudden rise had been the reason for Adisi's appointment to Sichuan, the mediocre Adisi had little chance to stay once Nayancheng himself lost favor. One day after he called Nayancheng back to Beijing, Jiaqing exiled Adisi to Ili and deprived all four of his sons of their positions.[151]

Jiaqing also penalized, during the spring and early summer, a host of other officers who had either failed to fulfill their duties or conducted themselves poorly, while making inquiries about the officers who had stood idle.[152] Early in the fourth month, Jiaqing took an even bolder step; he decreed a crackdown on the falsifying of battleground merits that had been prevalent. He requested records of all the promotions and awards granted during the first three years of the campaign when his father had been in control so that he could reexamine them and throw out the phony ones.[153] Although this move did not get far, given its impracticality, it brought one fraudulent case from 1796 to light in which a battle in Hubei that had never occurred had been reported to the throne as a victory and more than two dozen people were either promoted or rewarded. Jiaqing rescinded nearly all the promotions and awards granted, including those to Wang Xin, Hubei's governor at the time.[154] Severe as they might appear, those disciplinary actions in the first half of 1800 would be emperor's last stand in his wrestling with the leadership of the troubled campaign. From the second half of the year, Jiaqing's resolution began to evaporate. Ultimately, he retreated from his hawkish position to a laissez-faire one in the remainder of the long war.

LIU ZHIXIE'S CAPTURE

Early in the autumn of 1800, Liu Zhixie was arrested in Henan. The Qing had been hunting for him since the beginning of the rebellion, but leads had been few, and none of them were credible.[155] In fact, Liu had never left Henan. After he went into hiding on the eve of the Xiangyang uprising, Liu had stayed in the homes of sectarian members in Xinye and Dengzhou. When Qing local forces went from house to house in search of suspects, he hid in the backyard of the next-door neighbor. Once the troops moved next door, he went back to the first house. Through messengers, he had kept in intermittent touch with Wang Tingzhao.[156] Most likely, the connection had been established after the Xiangyang force passed Henan on their way to Sichuan in early 1797; otherwise the Xiangyang rebels would have sought Liu out when they were in Henan. Thereafter, Liu's stay in Henan could have become an important factor in the rebels' plans to go to Henan.

In the summer of 1800, Liu Zhixie headed to Jiaxian, about 150 miles north of Xinye, and stayed with Li Jie, a wine shop owner whom Liu had inducted into his sect in 1793. It remains unclear why Liu went to Jiaxian—Liu told his interrogators that he had tried to turn himself in to the provincial government of Henan, which apparently was untrue. It is unlikely, either, that he attempted to organize an uprising there, as the sectarian networks in Ruzhou prefecture, in which Jiaxian was located, were far less extensive than those in Nanyang.[157] Yet Liu's arrival could have been a factor in Li Jie's decision to rise up. At the time, one of Li's disciples had been arrested by the local authorities. Afraid of being implicated, Li and other sectarians revolted on 05/06/23 and clashed with the Qing forces. Written on one of their banners was "Heavenly King Liu Zhixie" (*Tianwang* Liu Zhixie)—it seems that Liu Zhixie had agreed to join them. However, seeing Li's small following and inadequate weaponry, Liu was determined to leave. He told Li that he could mobilize more people in Xinye and Dengzhou, but he had to go there and mobilize them personally. Ji Darong, an acquaintance of Li's and a former yamen runner in Jiaxian, who had been coerced to join the uprising, helped convince Li that Liu must make the trip and volunteered to be Liu's guide. When the two reached the seat of Yexian, about 30 miles southeast of Jiaxian, on 05/06/28, Ji Darong bamboozled Liu Zhixie into stopping at a teahouse owned by a friend of Ji's and told the friend to report Liu to the authorities. Liu was arrested at the teahouse.[158]

After Liu Zhixie left, Li Jie and his comrades went to nearby villages to recruit more followers, by conviction or force, and to loot supplies. Then they holed up in an old fort, Zhaijiazhai, on Jiaxian's border with Baofeng. On 05/07/07, when reinforcements arrived from Nanyang, Ma Huiyu, the provincial judicial commissioner, attacked the fort and destroyed it the following day, reportedly killing or catching more than one thousand rebels, but Li Jie and several hundred managed to escape to Lushi's Pengshan. One week after, Wu Xiongguang besieged Pengshan and rounded up most of the five hundred people holing up there. Li Jie escaped again but was captured days later.[159] In less than three weeks, Henan had extinguished the budding uprising without the help of any elite troops from outside.[160]

During his numerous interrogations, first in Henan and then in Beijing, Liu initially tried to distance himself from the rebels, but he ultimately admitted, after he was tortured in Beijing, that he had suggested planning the uprising for the quadruple-dragon time, that is, the dragon's hour on the dragon day of the dragon month of the dragon year. Yet Liu did not reveal any more information about the rebels, especially about their plans. Nor did he say much about the

Hunyuan sectarian networks. Angry at Ji Darong for selling him out, Liu claimed that Ji was the leader of the uprising in Jiaxian, but it failed to work. Liu was executed by "a thousand cuts" on 05/08/14, the day before the Full Moon Festival.[161]

During his captivity and after his death, Liu was exploited by the Qing in dismantling the rebellion. Jiaqing ordered campaign leaders and local officials to widely spread the news of Liu's arrest and the quick collapse of the Henan uprising. In the meantime, he declared an amnesty for all the sectarians in Nanyang prefecture who had helped Liu in order to set an example for his conciliatory policy, while blaming local officials in Jiaxian and Baofeng for stirring up the uprising with their relentless manhunt for sectarians.[162] Reiterating his intention to tolerate the sects, Jiaqing stressed that Liu was executed not for his preaching of the sectarian teaching, which, Jiaqing acknowledged, encouraged people to practice benevolence, but for instigating rebellion. A few days after Liu's execution, Jiaqing promulgated his well-known essay "On the Heretic Teachings" (Xiejiaoshuo), in which he made it clear, once again, that the White Lotus teaching was lawful and local authorities should no longer persecute sectarians as long as they were law abiding, although anyone who tried to conspire for rebellion should be punished no matter whether he or she was a sectarian or not.[163]

As some historians have pointed out, the Qing state, to serve the purpose of demoralizing the rebels, exaggerated Liu Zhixie's role, portraying him as the paramount leader of the sectarian movement as well as the ongoing rebellion after his arrest.[164] In fact, Liu's commitment to his sect's political cause was questionable, in stark contrast to many sectarians, who were unwavering in their belief even in captivity and facing death.[165] Liu's bowing out, twice, from uprisings proved that he was opportunistic and selfish. If his competition with the Shouyuan sect underlined his first desertion, his escape from the Henan uprising was indisputably an act of perfidy. That said, Liu nevertheless enjoyed considerable prestige among the insurgents, perhaps owing to his promotion by leaders such as Wang Tingzhao. Therefore, his arrest and death did amount to a blow to sectarians both inside and outside the rebellion. Zhang Shihu, one of the rebel leaders from Xiangyang, admitted in 1803 that fewer sectarians dared to join the rebellion after Liu's demise.[166]

Even before Liu's death, the insurgents had already had a hard time recruiting new blood. They could no longer galvanize the enthusiastic embrace of their cause from either sectarians or lay civilians, even though many sectarians as well as some Buddhist monks and Daoist priests were sympathetic, providing food and information to them.[167] Other than some local bandits, there was only one case of local

residents joining the rebels en masse. In the spring of 1800, Pang Hongsheng, a liquor shop owner and sectarian in Shaanxi's Xunyang, allegedly mobilized two thousand people, including his family and disciples, and joined the Wu Family Regiment.[168] The rebels in Shaanxi had sent agents to Henan to conduct recruitment, but it did not bear fruit.[169] Although Ran Tianyuan's coalition expanded its ranks dramatically in densely populated western Sichuan, most had been coerced, and they had either deserted or surrendered in a matter of days or weeks.

Having long been unable to capture cities or towns, the insurgents now became hesitant even going into villages in daytime and only looted them or kidnaped civilians by night. Moving around, they took only bypasses in the mountains, avoiding Qing checkpoints by running through them individually. They often had to abandon women and children, even killing them. Several insurgent bands, such as those of Fan Renjie, Gou Wenming, and Long Shaozhou, hid deep in the mountains astride Sichuan and Shaanxi without any major action. When more and more local residents took shelter in forts along with their food, draft animals, and belongings, attacking those forts became routine for the rebels. Since the rebels could lose a battle at the hand of armed civilians, however, sometimes the rebels chose to trade silver or other valuables for foodstuffs from the forts. Increasingly, the insurgents were in rags and barefoot, and their morale was low.[170] Shortly before he was caught in the battle of Matigang, Ran Tianyuan admitted: "Ultimately we will not be able to survive and can only hold on day by day."[171] Although several of the bands, such as the Gao-Ma band and Xu Tiande's coalition, were still potent, these few sparks could not rekindle the dying rebellion.

THE MILITARY FRONT

As the rebels were losing their momentum, the emperor was once again anxious for triumph, for the longest war that his father had waged lasted for five years. At the end of the fifth month, he urged the leaders in the three theaters, Lebao and Delengtai in Sichuan, Eldemboo in Shaanxi, and Mingliang and Wesibu in Hubei, to quickly wrap up the campaign. However, he was not willing to provide reinforcements since there were no armies available for deployment, and new troops were useless, he claimed. Instead, he instructed the leaders to send back the injured and sick to cut expenses.[172] However, the incumbent war leaders did not seem keen on completing the campaign, although they won battles, drastically reducing the numbers of the rebels. Increasingly similar in their approach in conducting the campaign and negotiating with the throne, Lebao,

Delengtai, and Eldemboo became a war-front triumvirate. Meanwhile, Mingliang, dispirited by the emperor's disregard, again deliberately delayed his operations.

The Sichuan Theater

After Kuilun's removal, Lebao had the full prerogatives of Sichuan's governor-general, even though he was only acting in the position. He instantly threw himself into restoring the networks he had created before his dismissal, especially renewing his relationships with Eldemboo and Delengtai. In blaming Kuilun alone for the Jialing River crossing, Lebao tried to exonerate Eldemboo, arguing that the rebels were far away from the river when Eldemboo pulled out from Sichuan. Likely acting on Lebao's advice, Zhou Xingdai praised Delengtai as the most effective general in Sichuan, noting his attention to placating coerced civilians but not mentioning Delengtai's extensive slaughtering of captives.[173] Lebao also tried to salvage Liu Qing. Although he asked for Liu's dismissal (but to allow him to stay at the front and redeem himself), Lebao again nailed Kuilun as the chief culprit in the Fu River debacle who sent away the troops and rejected Liu's reinforcement request. Shortly after, Jiaqing reinstated Liu on the grounds that Liu had had a good reputation.[174] Another person Lebao tried to befriend was Qishiwu. Owing to Lebao's plea, Qishiwu was retained at the front. He was then reinstated as Sichuan's provincial commander during the summer.[175]

But Lebao fumbled on the battlefield. Late in the third month, the Gao-Ma band in the thousands infiltrated Sichuan's Longan prefecture. Perhaps waiting for reinforcements from Guizhou, Lebao did not hurry to Longan, claiming that first he had to comfort the residents along the Fu River. After he finally arrived weeks later, Lebao was overwhelmed, on the stormy night of 05/04/28, when the Gao-Ma band assailed his encampments at the foot of Zhuzishan, a hill near the seat of Longan prefecture. The Guizhou forces led by Shi Jin, a regional commander and Lebao's protégé, arrived at dawn. Lebao was saved, but Shi Jin was killed, and several other officers who tried to rescue Shi were also killed or injured.[176] Lebao did not report Shi's death for days until he received a piece of good news: Wang Ying, a Black Band chief, had been arrested in Longan.[177] Taking no responsibility for Shi's death, Lebao faulted the Guizhou troops, most of whom were new soldiers, for having no discipline and endurance, failing to dash to the hilltop held by the insurgents and resist the enemy's charges. Upset by the loss of the able Shi Jin, Jiaqing vented his anger on Nayancheng, believing his early withdrawal from Gansu responsible for Shi's death. Sparing Lebao this time, Jiaqing charged him with exterminating the Gao-Ma band in Longan.[178]

But Lebao lost track of the Gao-Ma band. For more than a month, it roamed in and out the forests on the border with Gansu. Shortly after a battle lasting for days in Longan—Lebao did not arrive at the scene until days into the fight—the band returned to Gansu via Songpan.[179] Outraged by Lebao's botched performance, Jiaqing nevertheless restrained himself from cashiering Lebao, only depriving him of his hat trappings, thinking that his frequent shuffling of the leadership would cause the rebels to hold the Qing in contempt. Instead, Jiaqing ordered a demotion of Besiyang, who had been responsible for Longan's defense, and the death penalty for Zengshun, an assistant regional commander (*canjiang*) in Songpan.[180]



MAP 4.3. The War in Late 1800. The area most affected by hostilities is shaded. Arrows show the Gao-Ma band's movements.

The departure of the Gao-Ma band marks the end of hostilities in western Sichuan. The focal point moved back to northeastern Sichuan. Taking advantage of the fact that most of the Qing forces had gone west of the Jialing River in the spring, the rebel bands, including Xian Dachuan, Long Shaozhou, and Gou Wenming, had returned from the margins of Shaanxi and Hubei, and the remnants of the crushed bands had regrouped. Then, because of Delentai's pressure, the remainder of the coalition led by Zhang Zicong and Xu Wanfu returned from Guangyuan and Nanjiang. Those bands, having hundreds or thousands of people each, rambled in Taiping, Kaixian, Dazhou, Dongxiang, Tongjiang, and Bazhou, often making inroads into Ziyang and Xixiang, and some reached as far south as Chongqing prefecture. While the insurgents focused on regrouping and survival, the civilians in their forts took up arms and fought against the dispersed rebels, and they often won. In contrast, the Qing regulars were slow and lethargic, only making sure not to allow the rebels to take cities or approach the Jialing River. When the summer started, Delengtai paused after having pursued some rebels to Tongjiang.[181] Meanwhile, Lebao took his time in returning from Longan to northeastern Sichuan, saying that he was surveying the defense of the Jialing River. After an eventful and tense spring, the Sichuan theater was quiet, swallowed up in the unbearable heat.

Not until summer was nearing its end did both sides become active. Late in the sixth month, Fan Renjie, who had returned to Sichuan from Hubei in the early summer, converged with Xian Dachuan and Gou Wenming in Liangshan, again attempting to cross the Jialing River. After a tough fight, the coalition headed into the mountains astride Linshui, Dianjiang, and Changshou following a brief and unsuccessful siege of Dianjiang. Lebao and Delengtai waited for days, outside the mountains, for Qishiwu and Li Shaozu. When the rebels reemerged from the mountains and moved toward the river, they were routed by nearly twenty thousand Qing regulars and militiamen on 05/07/11 and then chased to Yuechi. Thousands of rebels were allegedly killed, and more than two thousand surrendered. Deeming that this battle sealed the safety of western Sichuan, the overjoyed Jiaqing made Lebao formally Sichuan's governor-general with the hat trappings of the second rank, although it was questionable whether Lebao had contributed much to the battle.[182] (Map 4.3.)

With their coalition upended, Gou Wenming went back to the border, and Fan Renjie and Xu Wanfu retreated to Daning. Remnants of several other bands, hundreds or one thousand in each, lingered in Tongjiang.[183] On returning to Bazhou, his hometown, Xian Dachuan was killed by his subordinates after Xian's uncle, a local militia head, refused to shield Xian and his men in his fort.[184] Many insurgents

surrendered, and others considered doing so. Hiding in the mountains in Dongxiang, his hometown, Zhang Zicong met with local officials, but several other chiefs who had just come to join Zhang stopped him, killing all but one agent sent by the officials. Tang Sijiao's negotiations with the government also aborted owing to the objections of his counterparts. Eager to make surrender deals with the rebels, Lebao went to Dongxiang himself. However, all the messengers Lebao sent to talk with Long Shaozhou were killed, including one of Long's remote relatives.[185]

In an attempt to reverse their rapid disintegration, Tuo Xiangyao, Tang Sijiao, Liu Chaoxuan, and Zhao Yiying (nicknamed "Pock-Marked Zhao" [Zhao Mahua]), most of whom were from Dazhou and Dongxiang, staged a concerted offense on 05/08/12 against the Qing forces under Delengtai, Lebao, and Qishiwu in the Dongxiang-Tongjiang area. The ferocious fight lasted for ten days, during which the rebels allegedly lost 2,400 to 2,500 people, only 2,000-odd surviving. Afterward the Qing forces wiped out, often effortlessly, one band after another. Tuo Xiangyao and Zhao Yiying died in the fight. Tang Daxin was killed by local militiamen when Tang went to loot their forts. Late in the year, Zhang Zicong was captured alone in Kaixian. The remaining insurgents retreated again into the mountains on or near the border.[186]

Anxiously following the campaign in Sichuan, Jiaqing did not fail to notice Delengtai's delays and idling during the summer. Calling him a different person from what he had been in the spring when he had fought effectively in western Sichuan, Jiaqing gave Delengtai several stern reprimands, almost dismissing him at one point.[187] He was also disapproving of Lebao's endeavor in soliciting surrender from the rebels. Encouraged by the insurgents' quick collapse in Sichuan, Jiaqing had become hopeful, and thus more hawkish, obliging his commanders to focus on the fighting as the rebels would only become willing to surrender when they were fatally beaten.[188]

But Lebao and Delengtai had a different agenda. Having not received any more funds since in the early summer, Lebao and Delengtai tried to press the throne to rescind his earlier decision no longer to allocate funds to Sichuan. To this end, they refused to cut the militias and requested more Solon soldiers. When Saicungga, a valiant Manchu officer who led seven hundred Solon troops, was promoted to provincial commander of Guyuan, Lebao and Delengtai begged the throne to keep Saicungga in Sichuan.[189] To justify the retention of the large force in Sichuan, the two actively advocated a strategy suggested by Jiaqing—to push all the rebels in Shaanxi and Hubei to Sichuan—saying that it was easier to tackle them in Sichuan, where the residents had been fully fortified. The rebels coming from

both Shaanxi and Hubei were dispersed or in small groups, and most of the Qing forces in Sichuan had been idling, yet Delengtai went ahead to request for funds from the emperor, claiming that more troops would arrive if the insurgents in Shaanxi and Hubei were all steered to Sichuan, but Sichuan's provincial treasury had run out of funds. While promising to finish off the rebels within the year and to clear out the remnants the following spring, Delengtai warned that a shortage of funds would impede the final victory.[190] Shortly after, Lebao and Delengtai sent a joint memorial to double down on their plea for funds, although the reason this time was for transporting grain to Taiping to support the troops rushing there to deal with the insurgents from Shaanxi and Hubei. They also reported that they had borrowed 10,000 taels from merchants in Chengdu, Chongqing, and Dazhou, and they also planned to borrow money from Hubei and Shaanxi, because they had long used up the funds to hire porters.[191]

The emperor was initially delighted with their willingness to corral all the rebels to Sichuan. In addition to verbal praise, he sent them numerous gifts, including fur coats, which were a rare favor. Nevertheless, he soon suspected that they were not serious about their promise to finish the war within the year and that neither Lebao nor Delengtai had fought a single battle for some time. Distressed by the thought that the war would linger into the next year, he reproached them relentlessly. Yet he bowed to their pressure on the funds, giving Sichuan 600,000 taels, albeit in the name of "postwar reconstruction." Mindful that the New Year was nearing, he ordered that 10,000 taels be used for soldiers' winter clothes.[192] Although the amount might not have met their expectations, Lebao and Delengtai had succeeded in getting the emperor to repeal his earlier decision no longer to pay for the campaign in Sichuan.

The Shaanxi Theater

After Nayancheng returned to Beijing in the intercalary month, Eldemboo quickly routed Yang Kaijia's band in Hubei's Yunxi, forcing it back to Shaanxi.[193] Feeling more comfortable without Nayancheng around him, Eldemboo achieved several victories back in Shaanxi, which earned him a noble title, viscount of the third grade, even though most fighting was done by Yang Yuchun and Yang Fang, the two Chinese generals. Having been promoted to provincial commander of Gansu in the spring, Yang Yuchun had taken over Nayancheng's elite troops and formed an independent regiment.[194] Late in the fifth month, in the depths of the Qinling Mountains, Eldemboo's forces crushed Yang Kaijia's band at Maoping and killed Yang.[195]

This victory rekindled Jiaqing's hopes of wrapping up the campaign

within the year, so much so that he offered to deploy one thousand Heilongjiang banner soldiers (who had been mobilized in 1799) and five hundred Jilin soldiers to replace troops who had long been in the war. Invoking their conscience, he reminded the commanders that the people would have suffered less if the war had been concluded sooner, while threatening them with severe punishment if they failed to meet this deadline.[196]

But there came another turn. The Dai and Wu family regiments broke through the Qing defense line along the plank trail and proceeded to Gansu.[197] They were followed by Zhang Tianlun and Xin Cong. By the mid-sixth month, most insurgents in Shaanxi had gone to Gansu. To aid the Shaanxi forces that had pursued the rebels to Gansu, Jiaqing sent Dingzhu, provincial commander of Zhili who had led the reinforcements to Henan, to lead eight hundred Zhili troops to Gansu. Jiaqing also warned Shaanxi officials not to be lax at home, for the insurgents would soon return, given scant supplies in Gansu, and told Eldemboo to stay in Shaanxi. However, Eldemboo headed to Gansu, leaving more than thirty thousand troops to guard key points in Shaanxi.[198]

In Gansu's Qinzhou, the Dai Family Regiment met up with the Gao-Ma band, which had returned from Sichuan but had been enclosed in Minzhou by the Qing forces of Gansu and Sichuan. Because of an argument concerning their next move, Gao the Second split with Ma the Fifth, leading away a portion of the band. His cousin, Gao Tiande, nicknamed "Gao the Third" (Gao San), stepped forward to colead the band, still known as the Gao-Ma band, with Ma. Joining forces with the Dai Family Regiment, the Gao-Ma band went back to Shaanxi and routed the Qing force in Lüeyang, killing several officers including a regional commander and more than two hundred soldiers.[199] Then they went eastward along the Han River, attempting a crossing to the north. Wang Wenxiong, the provincial commander of Guyuan, rushed to Xixiang, barring them from crossing the river and approaching the seat of Xixiang. On 05/07/25, Wang led more than five thousand troops and militiamen and attacked the insurgents who had dug in at Xixiang's Fabaoshan. The ferocious battle lasted from morning to noon; Wang was killed, and so were two dozen other officers and hundreds of troops and militiamen. Shocked by the death of Wang, the highest Green Standard officer killed in the campaign, Jiaqing named the Gao-Ma band the most "treacherous and fierce" of all the rebel bands.[200]

The other insurgents did not stay long in Gansu either. In Qinzhou, the Wu Family Regiment was joined by Ran Xuesheng, Zhang Shilong, and Zhang Tianlun, but they failed to cross the Wei River owing to the advent of Eldemboo, Qingcheng, and Hengšui. After a devastating

defeat near Jiezhou late in the seventh month, the insurgents returned to Lüeyang, but Wu Jinzhu was killed by Yang Yuchun and Gebushe at Shan'gou on 05/08/03. Wu's nephew, Wu Huaizhi, and hundreds of survivors made another brief inroad into Gansu. When they returned to Shaanxi weeks later, they split into two groups. Zeng Zhixiu led away nearly one thousand people, hundreds of whom crossed the Han River and went to Sichuan (most of the women and children were abandoned). Wu Huaizhi and another several hundred entered the Qinling Mountains.[201]

By the autumn, all the insurgents had returned from Gansu to southern Shaanxi. The Gao-Ma band and the Dai Family Regiment kept trying to cross the river—once they even tried it on the back of oxen.[202] Then Xu Tiande and his Black Band arrived in Ankang from Hubei, which put Xu near the Gao-Ma band. On 05/09/21, Xu met with Wang Tingzhao, Ma the Fifth, and Gao the Third at Shen'gou. Presumably, they would have discussed their next movements. Following the meeting, both the Gao-Ma band and Xu's band went to Hubei via Taiping. Most likely, they had decided to go to Hubei and then Henan, given great difficulties acquiring supplies in Shaanxi. In Sichuan, Zeng Zhixiu merged with Xu. But the Dai Family Regiment, Zhang Tianlun, Xin Cong, and others stayed in Sichuan, dispersing in Taiping, Tongjiang, and Nanjiang.[203]

The convergence of most of the remaining rebels in southern Shaanxi should have been an opportunity for Eldemboo to round them up. However, he did not seem to have such an intention. After his return from Gansu, Eldemboo stayed at Chenggu and delegated the fighting to his subordinates, chiefly Mukedengbu and Yang Yuchun. Not until Xu Tiande posed a threat to the seat of Xing'an prefecture did Eldemboo move to Ziyang. When Xu went to Sichuan, Eldemboo did not follow Jiaqing's order that he go himself to Sichuan to take on Xu but only sent back to Sichuan two thousand troops and militiamen who had followed the Gao-Ma band from Sichuan to Shaanxi. Staying in Shaanxi, Eldemboo's entourage—one thousand troops led by Zhaketaer, a Jinchuan orphan who had grown up inside the imperial palace—conducted only some skirmishes. Like Lebao, Eldemboo sent memorials periodically reporting on the different fronts. Taking up Lebao's motto "clearing one band first and then going to tackle another one," he comforted the emperor with his plan first to finish off the Gao-Ma band, then to clear Hubei, and finally to tackle the insurgents on the Shaanxi-Sichuan border.[204]

Despite his growing impatience with Eldemboo, Jiaqing kept praising him, saying that only Eldemboo was reliable, and granting him gifts on every possible occasion.[205] On 05/09/23, Jiaqing dismissed Taibu, the last reform-minded leader he had sent to the

campaign in 1799. Taibu had long fallen out of favor with the emperor, but the timing of his dismissal could well have been meant as a warning to Eldemboo.[206] Ultimately, when the New Year was only two months away, Jiaqing lost his composure. He told Eldemboo that, instead of appointing another commander-in-chief, he would lead an expedition himself to fight the rebels once the mourning period for Qianlong ended in the coming year. If this indeed occurred, as he threatened, Eldemboo would be held as a principal criminal.[207]

Pressed by the throne, Eldemboo and his subordinates set out for Hubei late in the tenth month. Following a battle lasting for days, his troops and the Hubei forces drove both Xu Tiande and Gao-Ma back to Shaanxi. However, while Eldemboo was in Hubei, on 05/10/25, Ran Xuesheng led a few hundred people and crossed the Han River to the north at Xixiang's Baimianxia.[208] Then in the night of 05/11/10, about one thousand of Ran Tianyuan's remnants led by Fan Renjie, Wang Shihu, and Ran Tianshi, who had recently infiltrated into Shaanxi from Sichuan, waded across the Han River at Chazhen, several miles west of Shiquan.[209] On hearing of the first crossing on 05/11/08, Eldemboo instantly decided to cross the river himself and did so in Ankang shortly after the second crossing. He brought all his nearly eight thousand forces to the north including a thousand Jilin and Heilongjiang bannermen who had recently arrived.[210]

With Eldemboo going north, there were more than twenty thousand Qing troops and militias north of the river (twelve thousand were there before Eldemboo's arrival, including reinforcements after the two rebel crossings), tackling merely a couple of thousand rebels, including Wu Huaizhi's small group in the Qinling Mountains. South of the river, the Xu and Gao-Ma bands were left to Qingpu, an unproven general, and Wen Chenghui, the new provincial administrative commissioner. Qingcheng and Hengšui were occupied with fighting Gou Wenming and Long Shaozhou, who had moved to Ankang and Pingli. On the border with Sichuan's Guangyuan and Nanjiang, Changlin scrambled to blockade and repel a wave of rebels who had moved into Shaanxi owing to the shortage of food in the Daba Mountains. Both Changlin and Qingcheng complained about insufficient forces, but Jiaqing did not think it possible to give them any reinforcements.[211] Similar to his reaction to his pulling out of Sichuan at the beginning of the year, Jiaqing initially endorsed Eldemboo's crossing but soon realized that it was a grave mistake. On 05/11/26, in a long edict to the leaders in Shaanxi, Jiaqing criticized Eldemboo pointedly for deliberately moving away from the more dangerous enemy. He obliged Eldemboo to either speedily finish off the insurgents in the north or entrust the operations there to Yang Yuchuan and return south immediately. He castigated Mukedengbu

and others for having failed to finish off Wu Huaizhi's and Ran Xuesheng's groups, totaling only one thousand, with their more than ten thousand troops, suspecting that they might have purposefully stalled because they did not want to be assigned to fight another band afterward.[212]

Eldemboo should have known well that the south of the Han River was more critical. However, like Lebao and Delengtai, Eldemboo had also been resentful about Jiaqing's tightening of the purse strings. After the summer, 3 million taels had been allotted to Shaanxi, but most of that sum had not arrived.[213] On 05/10/25, Jiaqing gave another 500,000 taels to Shaanxi. As he did in Sichuan, Jiaqing ordered Changlin to use 10,000 taels to procure winter uniforms for Eldemboo's troops for the New Year and told Eldemboo to send logistical officials to supervise this matter to make sure that each and every troop received his uniform. Although Jiaqing expected that this favor would cheer the troops up and stimulate them to achieve the final victory quickly,[214] Eldemboo would not have been satisfied—the sum was far from sufficient. Like his leaving Sichuan earlier in the year, his leaving the south might have been his way of expressing his disappointment and even anger.

The Hubei Theater

After Xu Tiande and Fan Renjie led their coalition and penetrated Zhuxi at the beginning of 1800, it moved eastward along the southern valley of the Wudang Mountains. Xu had organized his several thousand people into four divisions marked "east," "south," "west," and "north," each led by a "commander" (*zongbing*). Their having acquired a large number of horses in Hubei, many of his fighters were mounted.[215] When stopped by Wesibu at Fangxian, they turned north to Junzhou, attempting to cross the Han River to Henan. Wu Xiongguang instantly stepped up the river defense on the north bank and went to Nanyang to supervise it, while Wesibu cried out for reinforcements. Annoyed at Wesibu's ineptness, Jiaqing fired him and filled his position with Jiang Sheng, Hunan's governor. Only after Sun Qingyuan foiled the rebels' crossing attempt early in the second month did a relieved Jiaqing reinstate Wesibu.[216] Pressed southward, the insurgents showed their teeth again in an ambush at a mountain pass, Songjiaya, in Dangyang, inflicting heavy casualties on the Qing forces.[217] However, after a disagreement on their next plan, Fan Renjie left Xu and went to Yuan'an and Xingshan, whereas Xu Tiande returned to the Wudang Mountains, approaching the Han River again.[218]

At the beginning of the second month, Mingliang arrived in Hubei. Without a title and a stipend, Mingliang stayed in Xiangyang city for

nearly two months on the pretext of building a force for himself. Although Mingliang craved bannermen, especially those under Eldemboo, Jiaqing gave him only several thousand Green Standard soldiers, including one thousand led by Wang Kai, the regional commander of Yichang, and instructed him to hire more militiamen.[219] Concerned about the likelihood that the rebels might sneak into Henan by disguising themselves as refugees—as Xu's arrival had driven many to flee—Wu Xiongguang reported Mingliang's long stay in Xiangyang to the throne.[220] However, Songyun recommended Mingliang to supervise the Hubei theater, citing his experience, talent, and good reputation in Hubei. Therefore, Jiaqing granted Mingliang two lowly titles and allowed him to deploy two thousand troops from Guangxi when it became utterly necessary.[221] Mingliang quickly expelled Xu Tiande from the Han River, which earned him a promotion to guardsman of the third grade. But he was not pleased, constantly complaining about the insufficiency of his forces and asking for reinforcements.[222] Not until Mingliang suffered a fiasco in southern Nanzhang in the early summer in which he was ambushed by Xu's men, losing many soldiers and officers including Wang Kai, did Jiaqing approve his plea for several hundred banner cavalrymen from Eldemboo. Meanwhile, Jiaqing appointed Mingliang to fill the position left by Wang Kai, the regional commander of Yichang, and instructed him to go to Shaanxi once Hubei was cleared of the rebels.[223]

Nevertheless, the disgruntled Mingliang was loath to go to Shaanxi and report to Eldemboo. With the coming of high summer, Mingliang suspended action for about a month after he and Sun Qingyuan routed Xu Tiande near the seat of Jingmen subprefecture. Yet he continued his complaints about not having a big enough force.[224] Taking advantage of Mingliang's recess, Xu's band went back to the Wudang area and crushed the five hundred Qing troops in Junzhou, killing their leader, Foning, a regional vice commander. Then, in the middle of the sixth month, Xu crossed Huanglongtan (the Du River), a tributary of the Han River, and thrust into Shaanxi's Xunyang. Citing incessant rain, Mingliang paused for days by the river. Only when Xu returned to Hubei two weeks after did Mingliang act. Galloping on horseback, Mingliang chased Xu eastward at great speed, leaving behind the two thousand newly arrived Guangxi Green Standard troops crippled by sore legs or heat stroke. On 05/07/22, Mingliang pounded Xu in Nanzhang, claiming to have killed over a thousand. Delighted with this victory, Jiaqing agreed to let Mingliang have 450 Jilin and Heilongjiang bannermen who were on their way to the front and promised Mingliang that he could stay in Hubei.[225] However, Mingliang relaxed again after another battle in Yuan'an, in which Xu's

nephew, a likely successor to Xu, who had no son, was killed. Left unchecked, Xu's band waded across both the Nansha River and Huanglongtan and invaded Shaanxi again in the middle of the eighth month. Mingliang did not catch the band in Xunyang until two weeks after, but he returned to Hubei after only one battle.[226] Mingliang argued that the high water level in the rivers prevented him from going farther in Shaanxi and that there were new emergencies in Hubei: several rebel bands, totaling ten thousand people, had made their way to Hubei from Sichuan.[227]

Mingliang's early withdrawal from Shaanxi enraged Jiaqing. Comparing his failure to wipe out Xu's band in five months to Nayancheng's incomplete job with the Gao-Ma group in Gansu, he sternly reprimanded Mingliang, calling him "treacherous," "deceitful," and "manipulative." Although he let Mingliang stay put to tackle the rebels from Sichuan, Jiaqing wanted either Eldemboo or Qingcheng to go to Hubei to lead the campaign and contain Mingliang. Despite his doubts about the seriousness of the situation in Hubei, Jiaqing redirected the newly deployed Manchurian bannermen from Shaanxi to Hubei.[228]

As Jiaqing had sensed, Mingliang had exaggerated the dangers. Gou Wenming had only one thousand people including captured civilians.[229] The other four groups were the remnants of Ran Tianyuan's coalition, several thousand people all together, but only about one thousand of them able-bodied fighters, with several hundred horses and mules. Fan Renjie and Xu Wanfu led both the Yellow Band and a few hundred remnants of the Thread Band. The Blue Band was led by Ran Tianshi and Wang Shihu, and the White Band was likely led by a relative of Zhang Zicong. They moved from Daning to the north bank of the Yangzi River in the early autumn and entered Hubei from Wushan, where they defeated the Qing troops led by Deying'e, a regional commander. When the coalition reached Nanzhang, the news that more than one thousand Manchurian bannermen had just arrived in Xiangyang turned them back to Yuan'an. On 05/09/02, in a battle near the county seat, they killed Li Shaozu, who had pursued them from Sichuan. But Wesibu arrived in time to repulse the rebels from Yuan'an and press them to the Wudang area.[230]

Although he used those rebels from Sichuan as an excuse for his early return from Shaanxi to Hubei, Mingliang did not reach the battleground until the mid-ninth month, more than two weeks after his last battle against Xu Tiande in Xunyang. On 05/09/21 Mingliang crushed the rebel coalition at Fangxian's Shangkan, but he lost several officers when the rebels attacked his encampments in the night.[231] After the battle, the remnants of the coalition ran toward Daning in

disarray, abandoning women, children, and the elderly but carrying their injured fighters. Ignoring Jiaqing's order that he go to Sichuan to finish off those remnants, Mingliang stopped at Fengxi near Hubei's border, sending only dispatches to Daning.[232] Apparently, he wanted to stay away from Lebao's jurisdiction. Having been upset by Mingliang's delays in reaching the front, Jiaqing relaxed only a bit on hearing of his Shangkan victory; for only the first time since Mingliang's arrival in Hubei, the emperor granted him some gifts: leftover cakes from a religious ceremony and some cheese products. But Mingliang's refusal to pursue the rebels to Sichuan became the last straw. Even mentioning the death penalty (which was spared only owing to Mingliang's seniority), Jiaqing took away Mingliang's title of regional commander of Yichang and deprived him of the right to submit memorials. Jiaqing filled the position with Cangling, a Mongol aristocrat and Huiling's younger brother, who had escorted the Manchurian bannermen to Hubei.[233]

However, Jiaqing did not seem to have confidence in Cangling; he repeatedly ordered Cangling to surrender to Eldemboo the 1,050 bannermen he had brought to Hubei.[234] At forty-two, Cangling had a mix of civil service and military apprenticeships on his résumé but had never had a chance to excel in warfare.[235] Eager to prove himself, Cangling fought a series of battles against the Gao-Ma band first in Xunyang and then in Zhuxi in the first half of the tenth month. Aided by their firearms and quick movement, Cangling's men overpowered the band in all those battles, greatly reducing its size.[236] Cangling's impressive debut changed Jiaqing's opinion of him. Showering Cangling and his troops with rewards and praise, Jiaqing rescinded his earlier decision, allowing Cangling to keep those bannermen and charging him with annihilating the Gao-Ma band.[237]

However, when Eldemboo pursued the Xu Tiande and Gao-Ma bands from Shaanxi's border to Hubei at the end of the tenth month, Eldemboo requested Cangling's bannermen, reversing his earlier position of not needing any reinforcements. Jiaqing agreed. After Eldemboo, joined by Cangling and Mingliang, crushed the Xu and Gao-Ma bands and pressed them back to Pingli, Eldemboo took the thousand bannermen from Cangling.[238] Losing his crack troops virtually doomed the would-be upstart; Cangling subsequently led his last three hundred bannermen and joined forces with Mingliang.[239] Owing to Mingliang's contributions in expelling the Xu and Gao-Ma bands from Hubei and the defense by his colleagues in Hubei—Eldemboo also reported that Mingliang was repentant and willing to improve—Jiaqing's anger lessened, and he allowed Mingliang to stay in Hubei but still denied him the right to submit memorials.[240]

At this time, the only rebels left in Hubei were hundreds of the

insurgents led by Gao the Second. Entering Zhuxi from Pingli late in the tenth month, Gao had likely intended to remerge with the Gao-Ma band. Without women and children in the band, they moved extremely fast. When pushed back to Shaanxi by Mingliang and Wesibu, they immediately reentered Zhuxi and managed to reach Fangxian in the mid-eleventh month, which drew all the Hubei forces to Fangxian to block them from going farther east.[241] With Eldemboo north of the Han River in Shaanxi, Jiaqing decided to revamp the leadership in Hubei once again. A few weeks before the end of 1800, he appointed Šulin to replace Jiang Sheng as governor-general of Huguang.[242] Nearly seventy years old, Šulin was nevertheless reliable, expected to anchor the Hubei theater and tame the erratic Mingliang.[243]

JIAQING AS COMMANDER

By the end of 1800, the Jiaqing emperor had ruled for nearly two years. To many, his stunning first act against Hešen had struck the impression that his reign would be a time of change. He curtailed some expensive imperial projects. He called for a cleaner bureaucracy. He showed his concern for the spread of poverty. He considered ways to help the bannermen out of their economic plight while trying to revitalize the clearly decaying aristocracy.[244] As for the suppression campaign, Jiaqing had tried to get the derailed campaign back on track. Modeling himself on his hardworking predecessors, Jiaqing spent long hours reading memorials from the front, writing comments, and issuing edicts, sometimes several long edicts in a single day. On 05/03/29, he spent the entire day fence mending after learning that the rebels had crossed the Fu River in western Sichuan and continued dealing with other matters until near midnight, keeping all the grand councilors from going home.[245] Throughout the White Lotus War, he composed scores of poems with copious commentaries to document every move, gain, and setback in detail.[246] Jiaqing had been more than adequately informed of many aspects of the war. He often cross-checked the information reported to him by using intelligence he acquired from his own sources—some provincial officials, such as Wu Xiongguang, and special envoys, such as Zhou Xingdai, served as his eyes and ears, reporting to him in secret on their peers at the front.[247]

Nevertheless, Jiaqing soon demonstrated that he was bereft of the necessary mettle in carrying through his agenda. He frequently gave his opinions on the campaign, but he was inconsistent and easily swayed, changing his position often and at will. At times, he issued injudicious directives. In early 1799, he ordered the campaign leaders not to cross their provincial borders in pursuing the rebels, for it

would leave their own provinces vulnerable.[248] Despite his intention to make them responsible for their own jurisdictions, this decree amounted to a green light for the commanders to repel the rebels from their provinces without eliminating them. Even though he knew that micromanagement could be counterproductive when it came to directing military operations from afar, he kept sending specific instructions to his commanders.[249] Most critically, Jiaqing kept setting, amending, and then resetting deadlines for completing the campaign, to the extent that his deadlines no longer carried any authority, and nobody was afraid of breaking them.

Although Jiaqing paid close attention to personnel management in the war—he was proactive in appointing and dismissing key leaders, thus causing a high turnover rate in many positions—he rarely trusted anyone for long. Shortly after he sent several new leaders to the frontlines—Songyun, Nayancheng, Kuilun, Guwanghing, and Tojin—he began to form negative opinions of them. Consequently, none of them were allowed sufficient leeway and time to achieve much before they were weighed down by the emperor's relentless and frequent criticism and eventually dismissed or transferred. To be sure, Jiaqing might have been right when it came to Nayancheng's futile pursuit of Zhang Hanchao and his last men, and Mingliang's deliberate stalling. Nevertheless, his inclination to be suspicious and overcritical of his commanders did more harm than good. Jiaqing's distrust of Mingliang, which had been inherited from Qianlong, played a key role in Mingliang's passivity and use of delay tactics. Overwhelmed by the Jialing River debacle, Jiaqing was too quick in reinstating Lebao before the situation in western Sichuan became clear. His choice of Kuilun to set a precedent of severe penalty was misplaced, to say the least, given that he knew that both Eldemboo and Delengtai bore direct responsibility for the debacle. With Lebao's return, the old guard resumed leadership, signaling an end to his short-lived war-front reform. In fear of criticism of his erratic treatment of top leaders of the campaign, Jiaqing had hesitated to take tough action against the old guard ever since, even though he knew that Lebao had deceived the throne in Wang Sanhuai's capture, not telling the truth that Wang had in fact surrendered.[250]

In the limited scholarship on the White Lotus War, there seems to be a consensus that Jiaqing's conciliatory policy toward the insurgents and the sectarian movement was critical in dismantling the rebellion. Nevertheless, this policy was rarely implemented, and Jiaqing oscillated about it. Right after taking the reins of the campaign, Jiaqing passionately called for rebels who had been misled or coerced to surrender and promised to pardon them. Nevertheless, throughout 1799 the field commanders only paid lip service to this policy,

continuing their indiscriminate slaughtering of captives. At the beginning of 1800, Jiaqing revisited the policy and dramatically upgraded it, stating that he planned to pardon even those who had fought against the imperial troops and, more surprisingly, that he would tolerate the sectarian societies so long as they were law abiding. However, soon after this, the rebels crossed the Jialing River, triggering a snowball effect in the Sichuan theater. Panicked and baffled, Jiaqing immediately suspended the policy. He instructed Zhou Xingdai not to distribute and post his decree on this new policy in Shaanxi and Sichuan (advocating the policy was to have been Zhou's other task for his trip).[251] Then Jiaqing changed his mind regarding Funing, who had been under investigation for slaughtering surrendered rebels in 1796. Jiaqing quickly exiled Funing to Ili but reinstated him only a few months later, appointing him as an assistant commissioner in Lhasa.[252] Since then this notorious incident, which had figured large in the discourse of Jiaqing's psychological warfare, was not mentioned again in official correspondence. Although Jiaqing persevered in his position that coerced civilians in the rebel ranks should not be harmed,[253] his retreat from his conciliatory policy ushered in widespread atrocities against captives in western Sichuan—it was commonplace that hundreds of captives were massacred following each major battle—that did not raise Jiaqing's eyebrows. Consequently, the rebels' will to fight to the end was hardened; few rebels surrendered and several surrender attempts in Sichuan in the autumn of 1800 were aborted.

Not until late in 1800, when the insurgents in all three theaters had been largely subdued, did Jiaqing call again for the sectarian insurgents to repent and surrender. To accentuate the credibility of his willingness to forgive them, Jiaqing staged a mini propaganda campaign by making use of Zhang Xiaoyuan, a sectarian teacher from Fuyang, Anhui, and a relative of Wang Tingzhao. In 1796, Zhang Xiaoyuan and his fellow sectarians in Fuyang had not risen against the Qing but had chosen to wait and see, although both Wang Tingzhao and Wang Sanhuai had sent messengers to Zhang, urging him to take action. In the spring of 1800, Zhang's father sent Zhang and three other sectarians to Kashgar to visit Wang Faseng in exile. When Zhang's group reached Gansu, Zhang Xiaoyuan separated from his fellows and went to join the Gao-Ma band in Qinzhou, which had returned to Gansu from Sichuan. However, only months later, Zhang left the rebels and surrendered to Eldemboo in the ninth month. According to Zhang, he had become disgusted by the rebels' brutal killings and burnings. After failing to persuade Wang Tingzhao to surrender, Zhang had managed to escape from the rebels.[254] Despite Zhang's dubious story, Jiaqing chose to believe it. On 05/11/10,

Jiaqing ordered Zhang escorted back to Fuyang, and released to his father, whom he also pardoned for sending his son to visit criminal Wang in Kashgar.[255] Mimicking his grandfather's use of Zeng Jing, an anti-Manchu scholar, to showcase the emperor's benevolence and discredit Chinese scholars' nationalism, Jiaqing used Zhang Xiaoyuan to demonstrate how far he was willing to go in pardoning and tolerating the sectarians.[256]

Around the time he freed Zhang Xiaoyuan, suspecting that the leaders in the war zone had not done a good job in soliciting surrenders, Jiaqing issued a string of decrees reiterating his carrot-and-stick policy. More particularly, he urged the leaders to pay close attention to resettling former rebels, as he heard that some of them had rejoined the rebellion because they could not find livelihoods on returning home. He charged provincial officials with selecting reliable circuit and prefectural officials to march with the armies and resettle the captured or surrendered on site. But he insisted that no pardon be allowed to rebel chiefs, who must be either killed or caught.[257] In the months to come, however, Jiaqing would again brush the lenient policy aside and reinstate the killing of the rebels when he saw victory around the corner. Therefore, his conciliatory policy largely remained on the rhetorical level throughout the campaign. After the war finally ended, the editors of the chronicle of the suppression campaign, scratching their heads, nevertheless found a way to justify the emperor's inconsistency:

> From the start of the campaign against the sectarian bandits, out of his compassion for the stupid and stubborn masses, the emperor reiterated his policy of using both assault (*jiao*) and conciliation (*fu*). Then, because the bandits refused to repent and few surrendered, the emperor changed his position, emphasizing assault more. [The reason for the change was that] not until they were overpowered and defeated [by the imperial troops] would the bandits change their minds and beg for their lives. This is the [strategy of] complementing benevolence with justice (*yiyifuren*).[258]

In the few studies of the Jiaqing emperor, his inviting suggestions and criticism on taking the reins of government—in his own words, "encouraging the free airing of opinions" (*guangkaiyanlu*)—has been hailed as evidence of his enlightened rulership.[259] However, this liberal act did not get far. On 04/01/05, two days after Qianlong's death, Jiaqing issued a decree inviting officials—more precisely, censors—to submit memorials in secret exposing ills in officialdom.[260] Responding to the emperor's call, several censors and officials, including Guwanghing, stepped forward and accused Hešen, which provided Jiaqing with a pretext to take him down. Although this act might have been aimed primarily at Hešen, many people within and

outside officialdom took advantage of the call to deliver their opinions to the throne on a wide spectrum of matters. The outpouring of criticism and opinions quickly annoyed Jiaqing, who complained more than once of the wide discrepancy in their quality. Then the Hong Liangji incident occurred in the autumn of 1799—the outspoken but eccentric scholar wrote and circulated a long letter poignantly criticizing Jiaqing's leniency to Hešen's protégés and the guilty leaders of the White Lotus War, which led to his arrest and exile to Xinjiang.

In the summer of 1800, a few days after he granted suicide to Kuilun, Jiaqing decided to free Hong Liangji from exile, saying that he was afraid that Hong's punishment had intimidated people from voicing their opinions, since he had received fewer memorials and letters since Hong's arrest. In addition, Jiaqing ordered Hong's letter circulated in officialdom, as he thought that it contained some worthy points.[261] Having stayed in Xinjiang for only a couple of months, Hong returned home. Until his death in 1809, Hong was docile, ever grateful to the emperor, although he still concerned himself with public affairs.[262] Meanwhile, Jiaqing must have been contented: he had ultimately answered Hong's criticism by giving the death penalty to a high-ranking official in the White Lotus War.

Nevertheless, Hong's amnesty was not meant to usher in a renewal of the policy encouraging the free airing of opinions. About one month before he freed Hong Liangji, on 05/05/26, the day when he stripped Nayancheng of all but one of his titles, Jiaqing announced that he had entrusted the three leaders at the front, Eldemboo, Delengtai, and Mingliang, with completing the campaign. He further ruled that "all officials inside and outside of the court, save the grand councilors, should refrain from interfering with military affairs by back-talking and spreading rumors to cause disturbances" and promised that he would severely punish anyone who violated this order.[263] A few days later, he repeated this ruling in an edict to the three commanders informing them of his decision on Nayancheng. Saying that many of the opinions and suggestions he had received were worthless, only adding confusion to his grasp of the developments at the front, he told the three commanders that, from then on, he would only listen to what they reported to him on the campaign, so that they should not report any false information.[264] A virtual ban on discussion of the campaign within officialdom and in society, this order officially brought an end to the brief period of "free airing of opinions" in the wake of Qianlong's death.

At the end of 1799, Jiaqing peevishly dismissed the use of the word "reform" to describe his rulership: "I have taken my emperor father's mind as my own mind and adopted his policy as my own policy. In following all the rules he set, I am only concerned that I cannot

uphold his standard. How could I have made any 'reform' (*weixin*)?" Although Jiaqing's truthfulness in this statement is debatable,[265] it at least gives a glimpse of his mental state at the time: having encountered obstacles and backlash, he realized how difficult reform would be. At the war front, his draconian actions had failed to bring about the desired effects. His repeated harsh criticism and severe warnings to his generals had hardly worked. About the time that Jiaqing made the above statement, Zhou Xingdai asked him to take a stern tone with the war leadership. Despondently, Jiaqing replied that he had already done so, so many times that he had "dried his lips and exhausted his tongue."[266] To be sure, institutional obstacles and collective resistance from interest groups affected by reform proved to be tremendous or even overwhelming. Yet Jiaqing's irresolute temperament, specifically his tendency to contradict himself, was also a factor in his failure to put the derailed campaign back on track. The reversal of his reforms that unfolded in 1800 sent an explicit message that his administration had neither the commitment nor the capacity to implement what it had proclaimed. The war leadership was emboldened and empowered by this message. Despite Jiaqing's repeated stress on his new deadline for terminating the campaign between the autumn and the winter of 1800, the timetable was not to be met. The rebellion might have been dead, but the war continued, and how long it might last was uncertain.

CHAPTER 5

FINALE
1801–1805

> The reason the commanders have not cut all the militias is that the bandits have not been finished off. It should not be the case that the commanders have deliberately kept the last bandits unfinished because they have had difficulty cutting all the militia troops.
>
> —FANG WEIDIAN, 1804

AFTER 1800, the White Lotus War lingered on for another four years. The conflicts were asymmetrical, as the Qing forces were always many times larger than the insurgents' bands. Yet the former were slow in making progress, and the deadline set by the Jiaqing emperor was extended again and again. Pressed by Jiaqing, the campaign stewardship reported victory at the beginning of 1803, but operations continued. In late summer of 1803, victory was declared for the second time, but it was again premature. Then, not until the autumn of 1804 was victory announced again, and for the last time, though the search for the rebel remnants continued into 1805. This prolonged and agonizing concluding phase repeatedly evoked a sense of déjà vu.

Ironically, the main reason for the excessive delays was unrelated to the insurgents; it was the task of demobilizing tens of thousands of militia fighters. The massive employment of civilians for combat and auxiliary military tasks could be considered the most salient feature of this campaign. Its origins, mechanism, and dynamics will be discussed in the next chapter, and its tremendous financial cost and loopholes created will be examined in chapter 7. This chapter delineates the troubled process of liquidating those civilian combatants, which greatly complicated and delayed the removal of rebel remnants. Whereas the commanders did not wish to discharge the militias promptly, the militiamen also bargained to maximize their gain.

Starting from late 1802, some discharged militiamen joined the insurgents, further deepening the predicament of the suppressors.

LINGERING WAR, 1801

At the end of 1800, Jiaqing estimated that only twenty to thirty thousand insurgents were left at large, most of whom were coerced civilians.[1] With the Chinese New Year (February 13, 1801) approaching, the emperor was again gripped by anxiety. Although he said publicly that he wished to announce victory at the New Year's celebration, secretly he was concerned that he might not even be able to do so the coming spring when he visited his father's mausoleum to end the two-year mourning period for Qianlong's passing. Jiaqing charged the military commanders to speed up operations and civil officials to help block the rebels from moving around. Yet he had to be realistic. Three weeks before the New Year, Jiaqing extended the deadline for victory from before the New Year to the end of the third month.[2] Shortly after the New Year, he toughened his position toward the insurgents, announcing that he would not accept the surrender of the five major rebel leaders, Xu Tiande, Wang Tingzhao, Gao the Second, Gao the Third, and Ma the Fifth, though he would exempt lesser chiefs from death if they surrendered. He set up substantial prizes for either killing or capturing the five rebels and instructed his officials to have this new policy widely broadcasted, warning that nobody should take the credit in the event that the insurgents seized their chiefs and submitted them to the authorities.[3]

However, his commander-in-chief was not on the same page. Instead of planning to wrap up the campaign, Eldemboo suggested corralling all of the remaining insurgents to Xiangyang to make it easier to get the Qing forces supplied and recruiting more local officials from all over the country to lead fortification projects in Shaanxi and Hubei.[4] Enraged by Eldemboo's not committing himself to ending the war, talking instead about plans that might take months to produce results, Jiaqing rejected both suggestions totally.[5] The year 1801 did not have a promising start.

The Sichuan Theater

As discussed in the previous chapter, the hostilities in Sichuan had greatly diminished by late 1800. When 1801 started, only thousands of insurgents in several groups were hiding in the Daba Mountains in Guangyuan, Nanjiang, and Taiping.[6] Yet for months Delengtai and Lebao had not been able to wipe them out. A few weeks before the New Year, Jiaqing criticized the two for not having fought for days and shortly after demoted Delengtai's noble rank to first-grade baron

and reduced Lebao's hat trappings to the fourth rank. Believing there was not much work left in Sichuan, he ordered Delengtai to Shaanxi, letting Lebao and Qishiwu do the mopping up in Sichuan.[7] Nevertheless, only a few days later, hearing of a "sizable" victory in Sichuan, Jiaqing promoted Delengtai's noble rank to viscount of the third grade, upgraded Lebao's hat trappings to the third rank, and granted each the character *fu* (luck) in his calligraphy, though he still insisted that Delengtai go to Shaanxi.[8]

But Delengtai put off going to Shaanxi, citing new exigencies in Guangyuan.[9] However, after he marched to Guangyuan, Delengtai was annoyed by Qishiwu, who had been stationed in Guangyuan and had more than six thousand troops, because the latter had done little against the rebels and did not help Delengtai in battle. While complaining to the emperor about Qishiwu, Delengtai left for Shaanxi after meeting with Lebao on 05/12/10 in Nanjiang.[10] His abrupt departure startled Jiaqing, since it reminded him of Eldemboo's and Delengtai's pulling out of Sichuan one year earlier, which resulted in the Jialing River crossing by the insurgents.[11] Then Lebao turned back to the east, saying that new insurgents had emerged there. With the approach of the New Year, Lebao found excuses for not hurrying to hot spots, however. Activities came to a standstill in Sichuan.[12]

Not until after the New Year did both Lebao and Qishiwu hit the road again. They divided the responsibility: Lebao was responsible for eastern Sichuan and the Jialing River's lower valleys, and Qishiwu was in charge of the operations in northern Sichuan and the Jialing River's upper valleys. While Qishiwu, who had been reprimanded by the emperor, went to the border to engage the rebels, Lebao headed west again to secure the safety of the Jialing River.[13] Owing to Qishiwu's operations—he killed Zhang Shilong and crushed his band of a couple of thousand—several bands, including Xin Cong, Chen Chaoguan, Yan Shengke, Wei Bangbang, and Li Bing, entered Xixiang. However, hearing that Delengtai was heading for Xixiang, they returned to Sichuan. In Taiping, they were joined by several bands hiding there, including Tang Sijiao and Liu Chaoxuan. On 06/01/07, multiple bands, allegedly totaling eight to nine thousand, stunned their suppressors in a battle, killing and injuring several officers and an unknown number of soldiers before they moved south, first to Kaixian and then to Yunyang.[14]

Meanwhile, Fan Renjie, Wang Shihu, and Ran Tianshi led several thousand people and broke into Sichuan from Ningqiang. Having failed to take the city of Guangyuan and cross the Jialing River to its west bank in Cangxi, they moved to Yilong, where they were routed by Ahabao and Xue Dalie, a veteran Green Standard officer who was then a regional military commander in Sichuan, losing over two

thousand people, including Fan's wife and Xu Wanfu. Further attacked by Qishiwu and Xue, the band lost hundreds more, including Wang Shihu, who was killed in a battle in Tongjiang. With only one thousand people left, Fan decided to head south and merge with Xin Cong and Chen Chaoguan.[15] By the mid-second month, the amalgamated insurgents reached Wushan, poised to make inroads into Hubei. However, Qishiwu and Luo Siju forced them back north. Unable to agree on their next moves, they parted ways. While Xin Cong, Tang Sijiao, and Liu Chaoxuan stayed in Sichuan, Chen Chaoguan, Wei Bangbang, and Yan Shengke led three thousand people and entered Xixiang early in the third month. About this time, Fan Renjie disappeared from his suppressors' radar after his own band was crushed. Most likely, Fan went to Shaanxi with the other bands.[16] Apparently intending to keep the rebels from returning to Sichuan, Lebao followed them to the northern border, having Qishiwu enter Shaanxi to engage them. Qishiwu was not called back by Lebao until the end of the month, when he needed him to tackle Tang Sijiao and Liu Chaoxuan.[17]

At the time, the Tang-Liu band was the only major group in Sichuan.[18] Both Tang and Liu had joined the uprising in Dongxiang and become "marshals" after Wang Sanhuai and Leng Tianlu were gone. Having wandered on Sichuan's borders with Zhuxi for some time, Tang and Liu merged at the beginning of 1801.[19] Hiding in the mountains in Taiping and Kaixian and looting the local residents' forts, they took in several other small rebel groups, expanding their band to five to six thousand people. Pressured by Lebao and Qishiwu, the Tang-Liu band first went to Daning, where it joined forces with Xin Cong and Wang Shihu, and then crossed the border to Zhuxi in the early summer when the Qing forces launched concerted attacks on them.[20] For the time being, the band was out of Sichuan.

With more than ten thousand combat forces in northern and eastern Sichuan, excluding the regular forces guarding towns and checkpoints and tens of thousands of militiamen, the mopping up in Sichuan did not progress decisively, although Jiaqing thought at one point that even the militias alone could handle those banditlike remnants.[21] Typical of his penchant, Lebao paid ample lip service and tirelessly sang his own praises for placing local residents in fortified settlements. When it came to action, Lebao had busied himself running from one spot to another but had seldom conducted a battle. When he was confronted with the enemy, he either left, making up an excuse, or let the two generals with him, Ahabao and Xue Dalie, bear the brunt of the fighting while he stayed behind. Although he talked about corralling all the rebels from Shaanxi and Hubei to Sichuan to eradicate them—this was his excuse for not engaging the rebels

coming to Sichuan but allowing them to go deeper into the province, which utterly upset the emperor—he repelled the insurgents to either Shaanxi or Hubei, as he had with Chen Chaoguan's band and the Tang-Liu band.[22]

Numerous times throughout the year, the Jiaqing emperor reproached Lebao harshly and sarcastically.[23] He thought that because Lebao had been dismissed in 1799 for not going to the front but staying at Dazhou, he was trying to show his effort now by shuttling back and forth. But the emperor did not appreciate his attempt: "You lead the troops in Sichuan, first hurrying to the north and then hurrying to the east, time and time again. This way, not only do you exhaust your troops, but you also waste funds. Apparently, you are delaying [operations] deliberately with the intention of waiting it out."[24]

Aware that Lebao was not a capable commander—he thought that the rebels had gone to Sichuan because they knew that Lebao was the weakest among the commanders—Jiaqing also chastised him for having habitually gone where other generals went in order to share in their successes but never having fought a real battle himself, let alone exterminated a single band of rebels. The emperor once suspected that those who had been killed by Lebao might have been civilians. Tired of Lebao's empty words and endless excuses, Jiaqing had no mercy in exposing his inconsistency: "If the bandits run into the forest, you say that it is difficult to get into [the forest] because of ice and perilous paths. If the bandits run out onto a plain, you say that the bandits are too dispersed to be surrounded and attacked—you have been contradicting yourself like this. Then you just send in a memorial every ten days in order to get by, reporting the killing of the scattering bandits, dozens or a hundred each time. Like this, when will you be able to finish off all the bandits?"[25]

Yet Lebao managed to make the best of the situation. Knowing that Jiaqing was deeply concerned with the security of the Jialing River, when avoiding going to the front and leading battles, Lebao often used the excuse of surveying river defenses. In addition, he hired more militiamen in the name of guarding the river.[26] As will be described later in the chapter, the battle over cutting or keeping the militias would prove to be a long-lasting conflict between the central authorities and the war authorities. Lebao spared no effort to maintain or even increase their size, even when the number of rebels had been greatly reduced.

The Hubei Theater

When 1801 started, only one rebel band led by Gao the Second was in Hubei. Having returned to Hubei at the end of 1800, Gao expanded

his band of several hundred to three thousand by coercing local residents, but his attempt to move south was foiled by Qing forces in a fierce battle in Donghu on 05/11/23.[27] However, Xu Tiande's Black Band, six to seven thousand people, penetrated Zhuxi at this time.[28] Alarmed and infuriated, Jiaqing harshly reproached Wesibu for his failure at border defense and lodged his hopes in Šulin, the highly regarded new governor-general of Huguang.[29] Having marched "day and night," Šulin arrived in Xiangyang early in the twelfth month and immediately headed to the Wudang area.[30] (Map 5.1.)

At Fangxian's Qinkou, Xu Tiande met Gao the Second, who had only one thousand men left. Joined by another band from Shaanxi, their total size might have exceeded ten thousand.[31] However, the merged insurgents were routed at Quanxi on 05/12/15 following a few skirmishes.[32] This defeat might have warned the insurgents against staying together in the face of the superior Qing forces. A few days before the New Year, Gao went to Pingli.[33] Xu stayed, but his men split into small groups, running deep in the often-pathless mountains in Zhushan and Zhuxi. This forced their suppressors to trek in the mountains in smaller units, leaving behind heavy equipment and the logistical corps. Running amok south of the Wudang Mountains, the rebels attacked the seats of Zhuxi and Zhushan but failed to take either. Despite his struggles in Hubei, Xu adhered to the plan of going to Henan that might have been decided at his meeting with Wang Tingzhao, Ma the Fifth, and Gao the Third in Shaanxi the previous autumn; he sent agents to Shaanxi to call the rebels there to Hubei.[34]



MAP 5.1. The War in 1801. Shaded areas show the perimeters of the hostilities. Also indicated are the locales of Xu Tiande's death and the Gao-Ma band's demise.

On 06/01/23, Gou Wenming and Li Bin, a veteran rebel of the Tongjiang uprising and a chief of the Blue Band, who had met in Shaanxi, led their several thousand people and crossed the border to Zhuxi and then moved southward.[35] By the second month, both the Gou-Li band and the Xu band were in Xingshan after suffering major defeats.[36] In mountainous Xingshan, the two bands and several other groups in the area, including the Dai Family Regiment, fortified themselves on the mountaintops. In the early third month, the Qing

forces launched concerted attacks on the rebel strongholds, forcing Xu and Gou to part ways.[37] Not thinking the seven thousand troops in the Hubei theater enough, Šulin and his colleagues repeatedly pleaded with the throne for reinforcements; while recruiting more militiamen, they asked Jiangxi to send three thousand troops. Šulin also wrote to Delengtai, asking him to come to Hubei. Initially reluctant, Jiaqing ordered on 06/03/02 that Delengtai go to Hubei.[38]

In fact, before receiving the emperor's directive, Delengtai had arrived in Hubei in pursuit of Long Shaozhou, who had entered Hubei from Shaanxi via Daning. At the beginning of the second month, Delengtai had been assigned by Eldemboo to tackle Long Shaozhou. However, he waited for nearly two weeks to set out.[39] In Daning, Delengtai had caught up with Long, allegedly killing and capturing thousands. However, he paused again in the wake of the battle, waiting for awards and gifts from the throne, which gave Long the chance to escape Delengtai by using a dispatch to distract Delengtai to Taiping while he headed to Hubei. Not until ten days after the battle did Delengtai reach Hubei on 06/03/08. Long's stay in Hubei was short, however. After briefly joining forces with Gou Wenming, Long returned to Sichuan via the north bank of the Three Gorges. Delengtai stayed in Hubei to tackle Gou.[40] After Long left, Gou Wenming merged again with Xu Tiande in Xingshan. Braving unfordable rivers and deep, pathless forests, the two bands totaling seven to eight thousand people kept their enemy off balance. However, they were inflicted with huge losses when the Qing forces finally caught up them early in the fourth month.[41]

Contrary to Jiaqing's expectation that the two bands would be annihilated in just "days" afterward (he thus returned to Delengtai his deprived double-eyed feather), both bands survived. While Gou Wenming returned to Sichuan, Xu Tiande went to Zhuxi, where he was joined by several bands from Pingli, including those led by Fan Renjie, Zeng Zhixiu, and Chen Chaoguan, totaling perhaps six thousand. Not until 06/04/20 did Delengtai engage them and then pursue the coalesced insurgent force to Pingli. Once again, Hubei was free from major conflict.[42]

Shortly before the peace in Hubei, Šulin passed away on 06/04/09 following an illness. During his short tenure, Šulin had tried in earnest to end the long campaign speedily. Immediately after he arrived, Šulin headed to the front. At times, he had to dismount and tread in the mountains soaked with melting snow along with the troops.[43] Unimpressed with the militias, Šulin vehemently advocated for relying more on regulars. He also opposed stationing troops everywhere along the mountainous border and suggested concentrating the forces in more populated places.[44] Having had ties with Mingliang since the

second Jinchuan campaign, Šulin supported him, always speaking highly of Mingliang. At Šulin's request, Jiaqing kept Mingliang in Hubei and allowed Mingliang to submit memorials again, a privilege he had been deprived of earlier.[45] When he appointed Cangling as the first provincial military commander of Hubei on 06/02/24, when the position was created, Jiaqing slated Mingliang for Cangling's former position, regional commander of Yichang.[46]

Although Delengtai helped expel the insurgents from Hubei, he had again exercised delay tactics, moving slowly, often losing track of his enemies.[47] Despite Jiaqing's fuming at not hearing from him for many days, Delengtai idled for weeks between battles. Knowing Delengtai's propensity for demanding excessive funds and supplies, Jiaqing had told Šulin to supply Delengtai adequately, indicating his willingness to allocate some funds from the central treasury.[48] Nevertheless, Delengtai was utterly displeased with the logistical services in Hubei, which had not been managed efficiently. He complained bitterly to Eldemboo after he left Hubei, which led to the dismissal of Wesibu.[49] Having initially intended to fill Šulin's position with Wesibu, Jiaqing appointed Wu Xiongguang instead as the new governor-general of Huguang.[50]

The Shaanxi Theater

The situation in Shaanxi was more complex at the start of 1801. Gou Wenming, Long Shaozhou, and Dai the Fourth had been shuttling south of the Han River, trying to cross the river. Over Sichuan's borders with Shaanxi, smaller bands hiding in the forest made constant attempts to enter Shaanxi, together or individually. Supervised by Changlin, the Shaanxi forces had kept repelling them back to Sichuan.[51] North of the Han River, Ran Xuesheng met with Fan Renjie, Wang Shihu, and Ran Tianshi in the Qinling Mountains after Ran had failed to reach the west side of the plank trail.[52] Together they went to Shangzhou, aiming at breaking into Henan. Knowing that the throne would be enraged if the insurgents made their way to Henan, Eldemboo headed to Shangzhou and forced the two bands away from the border two weeks before the New Year.[53] Turning west, Ran Xuecheng and Fan Renjie separated. While Fan's group made its way to Sichuan's Guangyuan shortly after the New Year following a failed attempt to get into Gansu, Ran's band suffered crushing defeats by Yang Yuchun and Gebushe in the upper Han valley, though Ran also inflicted significant casualties on his suppressors. Thereafter Ran returned to hide in the Qinling Mountains.[54]

Despite the high alert on the Qing side, some insurgents made their way to the north of the Han River. On 05/12/18 (February 2, 1801),

the Gao-Ma band of several thousand people crossed the river at Ankang's Wukuaishi after several failed attempts.[55] Ten days later, on 05/12/28, Gao the Second, who had just been forced out of Hubei, crossed the Han River at Xunyang's Dazongxi. Then he moved quickly to Shaanxi's border with Henan, since most Qing forces in Shaanxi had gone west to engage Ran Xuesheng and Fan Renjie.[56] Eldemboo immediately detailed Yang Yuchun and Gebushe to tackle the Gao-Ma band, which had entered the Qinling Mountains, and assigned Delengtai to fight against Gao the Second's group (which they thought was Xu Tiande's band).[57]

As usual, Delengtai moved slowly. When he finally caught up with Gao on 06/01/13, however, he crushed the band in two battles, first at Shanyang's Gan'gou, and then at Zhen'an's Yezhuping, where Gao the Second was killed on 06/01/18. Delengtai slowed down afterward, losing track of Gao's remnants and allowing a few hundred of them to join the Gao-Ma band.[58] Early in the second month, Eldemboo sent the idling Delengtai to the south of the Han River to tackle Long Shaozhou and Gou Wenming, which led Delengtai to Hubei, as recounted above.[59]

By New Year's day, Jiaqing had not heard from the Shaanxi theater for more than ten days, not even receiving New Year's greetings from the commanders there, compounding his conundrum as to why the commanders did not wish to return home early by concluding the campaign.[60] As noted in chapter 4, Jiaqing did not grant any pecuniary awards to the troops for the New Year in 1801; his only favor was to allocate 10,000 taels for each of the three theaters to procure winter clothes for the armies. Perhaps realizing that the absence of the customary year-end award might have been detrimental, he tried to mend fences. Two weeks after the New Year, Jiaqing granted 100,000 taels of silver to Eldemboo and Delengtai to reward the troops and sent two court officials, Wesingge and Qiu Xingjian, to Shaanxi to deliver the silver as well as gifts to the commanders in the theater.[61] Similar to Zhou Xingdai's mission in the previous year, the two officials would also collect first-hand intelligence on both the insurgents and the suppressors.

Elated at first by the elimination of Gao the Second, Jiaqing was soon dispirited, as neither Delengtai nor Eldemboo seemed to be motivated to finish off the ravaged insurgent bands—again they did not send in a report for nearly two weeks after the death of Gao the Second. Giving both Eldemboo and Delengtai a "reprimand" and again reminding them of his wish to report victory when he visited Qianlong's mausoleum the coming spring, Jiaqing nevertheless realized that a victory by the end of the third month was unattainable. Once again he extended the deadline: to finish off the big bands in the

third month before he took off his mourning uniform and complete the mopping up by the fourth month so that Eldemboo and Delengtai could return to Beijing in time to accompany him to Qianlong's mausoleum in the autumn.[62]

Finally, another piece of good news arrived at the Forbidden City: Wang Tingzhao, who had been with the Gao-Ma band, was captured in the mid-second month. With survival difficult in the mountains in wintertime, the Gao-Ma band had first tried to reach the fertile Xi'an plain and then attempted to go to Sichuan via Gansu. Unable to break into Gansu, it turned south to Mianxian, where the band was ambushed and routed by Yang Yuchun. Because of a conflict with Ma the Fifth, Wang Linggao, a veteran rebel, led away six to seven hundred people and headed to Sichuan's Guangyuan, while the main group moved along Shaanxi's border with Sichuan. Wang Tingzhao was caught on Xixiang's border after Yang Yuchun caught up with the band and killed many.[63] Clearly aware of Wang's status, the thrilled Jiaqing put on the biggest celebration since Wang Sanhuai's arrest in late 1798, when his father was still in charge.[64] On his order, Wang Tingzhao was escorted to Beijing, the last rebel to be sent to Beijing. Wang was repeatedly interrogated, first by Eldemboo in Xixiang, and then in Beijing, where he was tortured before being executed by "a thousand cuts." Arguably the most sophisticated among rebel leaders, Wang answered questions carefully and tactfully, disclosing no information that could damage either the remaining insurgents or the sectarian networks at large. When captured, Wang had with him in a cloth bag a portrait of his grandfather, two mantras, and a one-page sectarian document (*shu*). Admitting that his grandfather was a prominent sectarian teacher and that his family and Luyi's Wang family had had close ties, Wang insisted that, being illiterate, he did not practice the religion himself: he had been forced to join the rebels after he was captured by them in Xiangyang in 1796 and had been respected and treated favorably by the rebels only because of his grandfather's reputation.[65] As such, one has to exercise judiciousness to extract credible information from the records of his interrogations.[66]

After Wang Tingzhao's capture, the demoralized Gao-Ma band moved to Ningqiang, where they were joined by other bands including that of the estranged Wang Linggao, boosting its size to one thousand people. But it soon disintegrated when continually attacked by Qing troops in the mid-third month. On 06/04/01, Yang Yuchun and others nearly eradicated the band in an ambush at Erlangba and captured both Gao the Third and Ma the Fifth; the survivors went to join the rebel groups hidden on the Sichuan-Shaanxi border. Jiaqing was overjoyed, ordering that Gao and Ma be executed locally by slicing

and slotting (*luange*) in front of the soul tablets of the officers killed by this band.[67]

Shortly afterward, Xu Tiande also met his demise. After Xu and Fan Renjie returned to Pingli from Hubei, they moved westward in small groups and waded north across the Han River in Xunyang on 06/04/23. However, Delengtai, who had followed the band to the north bank (though he did not get to the riverbank until one day after), soon forced the band to return south of the river on 06/05/07. One week after, Delengtai and Qingcheng routed the band at Pihepu, capturing both Xu's and Fan's wives. While fleeing, Xu was drowned at Ziyang's Xintan on 06/05/17 along with a couple of hundred insurgents and their families when crossing, in one boat, the Ren River deluged by days of rain. The rest of the band was shattered by Saicungga, who had reached the river ahead of Delengtai; only one hundred or so survived and ran into the forest. However, Fan Renjie had separated from Xu after the battle at Pihepu, eventually making his way back to Hubei.[68] Shortly before Xu's death, Chen Chaoguan was captured and killed by the militias in Xunyang.[69]

Although all five chief rebel leaders met their ends before the midpoint of 1801, the battles against the lesser chiefs in Shaanxi were more protracted and painstaking. North of the Han River, Wu Huaizhi, who had expanded his band to more than three thousand by absorbing the remnants of other bands and coercing local residents, shuttled in and out of the Qinling Mountains. Assigned by Eldemboo to tackle Wu, Mukedengbu and Fengshen achieved little for months. In his reports to the emperor, Eldemboo tirelessly complained about the difficult terrain but was uninterested in finding ways to overcome the obstacles. Late in the fifth month, Wu and his last several hundred men were forced to run into the pathless mountains in Ningshan (formerly Wulang) and were finished off on the top of a cliff on 06/06/01. Wu was caught after jumping off the cliff.[70]

Another group north of the river consisted of several hundred remnants of Gao the Second and was led by Gao Jianqi, the former's relative and lieutenant.[71] The group also roamed in and out of the Qinling Mountains for months, approaching Gansu at times. Initially, the band was dealt with by Liu Zhiren and Luo Ang, leading a force consisting of local Green Standard troops and militias. Late in the fourth month, when the band made its way to Gansu's Qinzhou, Changlin rushed there and first pressed Gao back to Shaanxi, then repulsed him to Sichuan. As Gao's band moved quickly southward along the Jialing River, farther away from Shaanxi, Changlin left the band to Lebao to handle.[72]

Arguably, the most disheartening operations in Shaanxi for the Qing were those against Ran Xuesheng, a remarkably resilient

insurgent. In the mid-second month, Ran pulled his band of one thousand out of the Qinling Mountains and invaded Gansu from Fengxian. In Gansu, Ran crossed the Wei River to the north and captured many local residents and hundreds of horses and mules. Having failed to get to Shaanxi's Qianyang, he crossed the river again to the south and returned to Shaanxi's Liuba. Having pursued Ran to Gansu, Changlin was always a step or two behind his enemies. In Liuba, Ran coerced more local residents to swell his band and got hold of about two thousand horses and mules. On 06/03/13, Ran lured Yang Kuiyou, a regional commander, and his four thousand troops into an ambush, killing at least three hundred troops and more than twenty officers; Yang Kuiyou barely escaped with his life.[73] However, Ran lost a great number of men and animals after Changlin caught him in Fengxian. Attempting to replenish his band with more people and draft animals, Ran returned to Gansu, crossing the Wei River to the north again on 06/03/29.[74] Having heard that a sectarian society in Qianyang had just conducted an aborted uprising, Ran also intended to recruit the surviving sectarians there.[75] In Longzhou, Ran defeated Changlin in a battle, leaving over one hundred troops and militiamen dead.[76] However, on 06/04/05, Eldemboo and his privy forces led by Zhaketaer, Sangjisitaer, a Jinchuan native who had been brought to Beijing and become a banner officer, and Yang Fang as well as Qingcheng's forces dealt Ran a decisive blow in a narrow valley at Caobaiyu, though the Qing side also lost dozens of troops and several officers, including Eldemboo's younger brother.[77] Instead of returning to Shaanxi as suggested by his men, Ran went to Guyuan, which was flat enough for his many horses to march fast. Only after another defeat by Eldemboo at Guyuan's Zhangyipu on 06/04/10 did Ran turn back, crossing the Wei River again to the south and returning to Shaanxi.[78]

In Shaanxi, Ran was forced to move southward, fording the Han River to the south in Yangxian on 06/04/25. Knowing that Ran was no longer as dangerous as before, Eldemboo handed the fight to Yang Yuchun and Zhaketaer. Indeed, Ran was never able to approach the Han River. After a brief foray into Zhuxi and Zhushan, Ran joined forces with several other groups in Xunyang, but they parted ways soon after.[79] Having lost all their draft animals, Ran and his last few hundred men went to Daning's Xujiaba early in the seventh month.

Throughout the first half of 1801, Jiaqing had been constantly enraged at the sluggish operations in Shaanxi, often scolding Eldemboo for procrastinating and giving him "reprimands." At one point, he warned Eldemboo not to follow Nayancheng's trajectory to disgrace. Jiaqing was not pleased by other generals either, criticizing Mukedengbu for his slow actions against Wu Huaizhi and blaming

Delengtai for allowing Xu Tiande and Fan Renjie to cross the Han River to the north.[80] He was particularly infuriated by Changlin's lamentable operations against Ran Xuesheng. Suspecting that Changlin had falsified intelligence, Jiaqing told Eldemboo and Lu Youren to watch him in secret. Finally, he relieved Changlin of his military duty.[81] Having always been on the defensive, Eldemboo reacted strongly when the campaign in Shaanxi turned more to his advantage. In response to another round of royal criticism in the late spring, he argued that there was no reason for him to delay the fighting, pointing out that he had even missed his mother's funeral because of the campaign. Meanwhile, he promised Jiaqing that operations would be largely settled "in days."[82] Apparently, Eldemboo was overly optimistic.

Late 1801

Early in the third month, the two royal commissioners Wesingge and Qiu Xingjian set out to return Beijing from Shaanxi. Since the captured Wang Tingzhao was to be sent to Beijing, Eldemboo asked the commissioners to travel with the escort and oversee it en route. The escort was led by three banner generals, who were homebound after having spent years in the campaign, and a magistrate of Shaanxi. In addition, Eldemboo sent Zhu Xun, his own logistical tsar, with them.[83] Zhu's inclusion in the well-staffed escort is intriguing: he might have had another mission in Beijing. Zhu might have been directed by Eldemboo to deliver "gifts" to the two commissioners' homes in Beijing, since it was too conspicuous for the two to bring oversized luggage with them when returning home.

The report by Wesingge and Qiu Xingjian, which was not submitted until weeks after their return, is disappointing for historians. They willingly gave the benefit of the doubt to what they heard from Eldemboo and his subordinates in Shaanxi. Echoing the commanders' points of view, the two reported that the reason for the campaign's slow progress was that the numbers of rebels had decreased, which made it more difficult to fight against them. They also relayed Eldemboo's opinion that he did not need reinforcements but would like to use the funds saved to reward the troops already deployed. In discussing war finances, they defended the campaign's enormous expenditures by pointing to the high costs of transporting supplies. Moreover, they stated that the set rates of pay for transportation were too low. The only problem they identified was nothing new but an issue of which the throne had long been aware: the incompetence of the hired militias. Calling them "ragtags," they criticized them as not well trained and undisciplined, and blamed them for wartime corruption. Yet they quickly added that the militias under Eldemboo's

and Delengtai's command were exceptions, as the two commanders had transformed them into capable soldiers. When it came to their assessment of the war leadership, Wesingge and Qiu had praise only for Eldemboo, being guarded about Delengtai: "We did not meet with him but heard that he is conversant with military affairs and truly capable in fighting. Plus his conduct has improved of late."[84] The only high-ranking official they singled out was Changlin. Perhaps knowing of the emperor's constant criticism of Changlin, they suggested transferring his troops to Eldemboo, as Changlin was not fit to lead armies. Jiaqing deprived Changlin of his military duty but let Eldemboo use his discretion on the other suggestions by the two, which mainly concerned local defense and the training of local garrisons, although he told Eldemboo to carefully administer the pay to militias. However, the two commissioners did report something the emperor wanted to hear: they felt that the campaign was nearing its end, reporting that only twenty thousand insurgents were at large in the three provinces, more shattered and dejected than ever. Thus, they predicted that the war would reach its conclusion in the coming autumn or winter.[85] As the summer progressed, the news from the front seemed to corroborate their prediction. First, Ran Xuesheng was pushed away from the Han River. Then Xu Tiande was dead. Again seeing a ray of light, Jiaqing could not hide his excitement, expecting that "the news of triumph will come soon." Once again, he set up a deadline of within the seventh month to clear out all the rebel bands.[86] However, Eldemboo cautioned the emperor that there were many lesser insurgent chiefs besides a dozen or so major ones and that those lesser chiefs could easily regroup the rebel remnants.[87]

Clearly, Eldemboo was not prepared to meet the deadline. He was urged by Jiaqing to go to Hubei and help tackle the Tang-Liu band, since there was not much to do in Shaanxi. But, during his one-month stay in Zhuxi, Eldemboo did not achieve much. When he returned to Shaanxi in the late summer, most of the last couple thousand rebels in Shaanxi had been pressured into the Daba Mountains. Moving near the border with Sichuan, Eldemboo supervised the search in the mountains, sometimes making sorties into Sichuan. Meanwhile, under Lu Youren's supervision, the Shaanxi forces and militias were clearing the Qinling Mountains of rebel remnants. Although Eldemboo and Lu kept giving promising predictions, the operations in Shaanxi were not concluded by the year's end.[88]

After Xu Tiande's death, Delengtai was again assigned by Eldemboo to tackle Long Shaozhou, who had returned to Sichuan from Hubei in the late spring (he then went to Shaanxi but was soon repelled to Sichuan) with a band of several thousand people. Delengtai first took a recess after arriving at Taiping in mid-summer, idling for several

weeks, and did not communicate with Beijing for nearly a month. Not until early in the seventh month did he engage Long in mountainous Daning. In two weeks, Delengtai reduced Long's crowd to only a few hundred. However, Delengtai slowed down again, allowing the band to shuttle back and forth between Sichuan and Hubei via the north bank of the Yangzi River, while he complained about inadequate supplies and the hardship his troops had to endure, aiming at more favors.[89] Although he had become increasingly irked by Delengtai's delays, Jiaqing again compromised, granting him and his army gifts and silver plaques, and acquiescing to a break after they eliminated Long.[90] Finally, after Long infiltrated Shaanxi from Zhuxi, Delengtai's lieutenants, Saicungga, Wenchun, and Ma Yu, killed Long and wiped out his last two hundred men at Pingli on 06/09/27, but Delengtai was elsewhere, allegedly picking up the invalids who had remained in different locales.[91]

The summer in eastern Sichuan was quiet; the Qing forces conducted only a few battles to either repel the rebels to Shaanxi or round up remnants of the beaten bands.[92] In the late summer, Lebao declared that eastern Sichuan had been cleared of rebels. However, on Sichuan's northern border, the arrival of Gao Jianqi and others from Shaanxi kept the area unsettled. Taking in small groups, Gao replenished his band with two thousand people. Criticized and urged by the emperor, Lebao finally left Dazhou and headed to Tongjiang in late summer. Lebao's men chased Gao first to the Jialing River and then back to the Daba Mountains on the northern border but were always slower than the enemy. In the mountains, Gao linked up loosely with several other bands hiding there.[93] When Ran Xuesheng and his last four hundred men went to Tongjiang to loot harvests after having hidden in the mountains in Taiping and Daning for weeks, he and Gao came together. On 06/08/06, the Sichuan forces attacked them. Gao escaped, but Ran was captured.[94] Afterward, the Sichuan forces pressed the remaining insurgents to Shaanxi, which prompted the Shaanxi forces to move to the border, operating in and out of Sichuan. While Lebao again bowed out, returning to Dazhou, the Shaanxi forces produced some results: Yang Fang and Gebushe wiped out the branch of the Qi Family Regiment led by Xin Dou; Fengshen and Sangjisitaer captured Gao Jianqi and finished off his group in Xixiang; the defeated Wei Bangbang was killed by civilians; and Yang Yuchun routed Li Bin in northern Sichuan. In one of the battles, Yang's men captured many relatives of rebel chiefs killed earlier.[95] The only major band remaining in Sichuan was that of Tang Sijiao and Liu Chaoxuan, which had returned from Hubei in the late summer. After having coerced thousands of people in Liangshan, Dazhu, and Dianjiang, it moved to the Jialing River. But Lebao did not set out to

tackle the band until the mid-ninth month, after being reprimanded by Jiaqing, who even mentioned “military law.” However, Lebao did no more than corral the group to the northern border. Not until Delengtai joined Lebao at the end of 1801 were Liu and Tang forced to part ways, each leading away hundreds of people.[96]

Among the three provinces, Hubei was closest to completing its operations. On arriving in Xiangyang in the fifth month, Quanbao, the new governor, reported that Hubei was at peace. Throughout the summer, the Hubei forces kept fending off rebels who found their way into Zhuxi. Although the Tang-Liu band had an extended stay in Hubei in the summer, it was kept from cities or towns.[97] Shortly before the Tang-Liu band left Hubei, Jiaqing called Mingliang, who was nearly seventy years old, back to Beijing, deeming that the campaign in Hubei had largely ended.[98] For the rest of 1801, the Hubei troops hunted down small groups and scattered rebels in the steep mountains north of the Yangzi River in Badong and Xingshan, and in southern Zhuxi, Zhushan, and Fangxian. The biggest groups were those led by Zeng Zhixiu and Dai the Fourth, each consisting of a couple of thousand people.[99] At the end of 1801, Jiaqing directed Wu Xiongguang, who had stayed in Xiangyang, to go to central northern Hubei to handle the influx of refugees into the region and told him to consider repatriating the troops from Hubei.[100]

Although he had always been exhilarated when hearing of the demise of a rebel chief, the Jiaqing emperor was more dismayed than pleased as the year wound down, as his deadline had failed to be met time after time, and the triumvirate did not share his keenness for victory. When the seventh month neared its end, he extended the deadline to the eighth or ninth month, thinking that the dry and comfortable autumn was the optimal time for mopping up. However, he had to change it yet again to the end of the tenth month.[101] In order to hold the triumvirate accountable, Jiaqing obliged the three theaters to report the numbers of remaining insurgents. When he came up with a grand total of 24,000 at the end of the summer, Jiaqing warned Eldemboo that he would deduct the eliminated rebels from that total and would hold Eldemboo responsible if the number was down but the insurgents still ran amok.[102] Initially, this scheme seemed to work; the total number kept going down.[103] The buoyed Jiaqing was again willing to pardon surrendered insurgents and instructed local officials to be more proactive in helping the troops round up scattered insurgents.[104] When his grand total became 2,000 at the end of the tenth month, Jiaqing told the triumvirate to discuss the campaign’s conclusion when the three were to meet in Tongjiang, expecting them to “largely complete the campaign” (*kanding daju*) within the eleventh month and clear all the remnants before the New

Year.[105]

But the triumvirate was not on board. Earlier in 1801 when he had learned that the emperor's number had decreased to 10,000, Eldemboo contended that the numbers in their reports had always been estimates, lower than the reality, and that, in addition to the 10,000 organized insurgents, there were 3,000-plus scattered rebels who had survived their bands. Yet Eldemboo admitted that it was not worth keeping the seventy to eighty thousand troops deployed and suggested repatriating the bannermen and Green Standard troops deployed from other provinces after the major rebel bands were crushed, and using the troops of the battleground provinces and the militias for mopping up so that the expenses would be significantly lowered. But he avoided mentioning the cost of the militias, let alone cutting them.[106] Delighted by their intention to reduce the armies, Jiaqing awarded both Eldemboo and Delengtai with higher noble ranks; granted promotions and gifts to selected generals, bannermen, Green Standard officers, and local officials; and awarded grand councilors.[107] Estimating soon after that there might be only 2,500 organized insurgents and 3,000 scattered ones, he started planning for Eldemboo's return to the capital when the war ended.[108]

Nevertheless, there was more at stake than rounding up the insurgents. Laying his cards on the table, Eldemboo first asked for promotions of a dozen Shaanxi officials involved in the campaign.[109] Then he requested more funds for rewarding both troops and civilians —the latter had been asked to help fighting rebel remnants of late— because he had used up, months earlier, the 15,000 taels that he had received for awards when he became the commander-in-chief. Readily giving his consent to Eldemboo's first request, Jiaqing expressed his displeasure about awarding the troops from war funds. However, he agreed to allocate 100,000 taels for awards from the 400,000 taels he had just granted to Sichuan and Shaanxi, because Eldemboo promised to conclude the major operations within the eleventh month.[110] However, Eldemboo was completely silent about the tens of thousands of militiamen still employed in the three provinces, even though Jiaqing had repeatedly urged him to reduce their number in order to save money.[111] Nor did Lebao and Delengtai touch on the issue. Only Qingcheng reported that he was selecting and keeping able-bodied soldiers and militiamen and dismissing puny ones, and that he would select some militiamen to fill the rosters if new Green Standard units were set up in Shaanxi in the future. On receiving Qingcheng's memorial, Jiaqing, who had been wondering why the triumvirate was keeping silent on the militias, issued an edict on 06/11/20 on the settlement of the militia issue.[112] However, a twist in the campaign disrupted him from pursuing the issue.

The culprit was Gou Wenming, a pious sectarian from Sichuan's Bazhou. In his mid-forties and a relative of Luo Qiqing through marriage, Gou had taken over the leadership of Sichuan's White Band after Luo's death in 1799.[113] As pointed out by Wesingge and Qiu Xingjian, the suppressors had overlooked Gou, no general being responsible for fighting him, which allowed Gou to hide in the Daba Mountains for extensive periods and shelter many relatives of deceased rebel chiefs. In the summer of 1801, Fan Renjie joined Gou after leaving Xu Tiande. Then they roamed about Sichuan's treacherous borders with Hubei and Shaanxi, briefly joining forces with other groups including the Tang-Liu band. When Qishiwu pursued the Tang-Liu band from Hubei to Sichuan in the late summer, Delengtai assigned him to tackle Gou. Late in the tenth month, after a sortie to Xixiang, Fan parted with Gou in Tongjiang and went to Hubei. Meanwhile, Gou moved westward to Guangyuan.[114] Likely, they were trying to confuse and distract their enemy, giving both a chance to reach their planned destinations.

Despite his previous lack of success, Qishiwu was again told by Delengtai to pursue Gou. However, before he set out, Qishiwu first went to the seat of Taiping county to claim the stipends for his troops and stayed there for six days. When the triumvirate exposed Qishiwu's poor performance in a joint memorial following their meeting in Xixiang on 06/11/10, Jiaqing scolded Qishiwu and ordered Eldemboo to investigate his delays. Yet Jiaqing was more worried about Gou, who had expanded his band to more than two thousand.[115] Jiaqing's concern was not groundless. After reaching Guangyuan's border with Shaanxi on 06/11/12, Gou crossed the Jialing River in the night. Days later, he invaded Gansu. When Qishiwu arrived at Guangyuan, he caught only Gou's tail.[116] Jiaqing was enraged, as Gou's invasion of Gansu signaled an escalation of the conflict, shattering his plan to conclude the campaign before the New Year. He was no less furious at Eldemboo and Delengtai, because the two did not take any disciplinary action against Qishiwu and had no intention to catch and fight Gou themselves, only sending Qingcheng to take on Gou. Pouring out his frustration and anger in volumes, the emperor dismissed Qishiwu and had Eldemboo and Delengtai "reprimanded." He also chastised Lebao for not even knowing of Gou's arrival in Gansu days after the event.[117]

Gou Wenming's sojourn in Gansu was brief, however. Having failed to get to Sichuan via Gansu, Gou was pressed by Qingcheng and Qishiwu to turn back to Shaanxi. On 06/11/28 (January 2, 1802), Gou crossed the Jialing River to the east bank in Ningqiang and returned to Guangyuan.[118] Although Jiaqing's concern about the spread of the rebellion to Gansu dissipated, what had unfolded in the

incident did not bode well for him. Maintaining a wait-and-see attitude, both Eldemboo and Delengtai acted slowly and passively, despite Jiaqing's reprimands and urging. When Eldemboo arrived in Baocheng ten days after Gou entered Gansu, he stayed put, sending Yang Yuchuan to lead a force of ten thousand to Gansu. Eldemboo also kept Delengtai in northern Sichuan dealing with some rebel remnants. Only after Gou's return to Sichuan did Eldemboo move again, joining Delengtai in Guangyuan.[119] Apparently, the commanders were not enthusiastic about ending the campaign before the New Year.

NEGOTIATING VICTORY, 1802

After having suffered several devastating defeats in 1801 and lost their key leaders in Xu Tiande and Wang Tingzhao, the rebels were on their way to disintegration. At the end of 1801, Delengtai estimated that six to seven thousand rebels were left at large.[120] Constantly short of supplies and ammunition—at times they had only rocks—they usually avoided confrontation with their suppressors.[121] Even the most resolute could not help but be overtaken by pessimism. Gou Wenming told his followers: "The fated time for the White Lotus religion is over; we will all die sooner or later."[122] Nevertheless, few committed rebels surrendered. In the summer of 1801, Delengtai sent two surrendered insurgents to persuade Long Shaozhou's men to surrender. Long had both killed.[123]

The committed rebels were called *zhengzei* (authentic bandits) by their suppressors to distinguish them from coerced civilians, who were inclined to escape or surrender. The *zhengzei* were mostly sectarians from Hubei's Xiangyang and Sichuan's Dazhou, Bazhou, and Tongjiang, the birthplaces of the 1796 uprisings, and many were relatives and close associates of the deceased leaders of those uprisings. With the emperor's acquiescence and even encouragement, the Qing forces had been resorting more to the stick than to the carrot. Although Delengtai remained the record holder, all the Qing commanders and viceroys slaughtered captives in large numbers and executed their chiefs by "a thousand cuts."[124] Given that those killings unfolded in front of captives some of whom were later released, word would have spread near and far about the gruesome ending of the true insurgents, which would help harden the remaining insurgents' resolve to fight to the end. They maintained their divisions marked by colors, kept titles such as "marshal," "vanguard," "commander," and "banner bearer," and carried flags and pennants identifying their chiefs. After one chief was killed or captured, a new one would emerge from among the survivors. Although they tried to avoid the

enemy, once they encountered the Qing forces, they fought to the last breath, which often amazed their suppressors.[125]

Battling against Gou Wenming and Fan Renjie

As 1802 began, the only forceful rebel band was Gou Wenming's. Having returned to Sichuan, Gou swelled his band to more than three thousand people by taking in small groups and capturing civilians along his way. In Sichuan he kidnaped people and seized horses and mules by attacking the local residents' forts. Then Gou headed eastward to Bazhou and Tongjiang. Although both Delengtai and Eldemboo had rushed to Sichuan, they were not inclined to exterminate Gou's band swiftly, ignoring the deadline to finish off the band within the first lunar month, while complaining about their forces being small, each having only two thousand troops.[126]

As a warning to the commanders, Jiaqing cashiered Qishiwu. In a long edict to Eldemboo and Delengtai on 06/12/09, he compared Qishiwu's stay in Taiping for six days to Kuilun's stay at Leiyinpu two years earlier, which gave Ran Tianyuan's coalition the opportunity to cross the Jialing River.[127] However, Eldemboo and Delengtai defended Qishiwu and forced Jiaqing to back down from his intent to have Qishiwu executed, accepting their suggestion of giving him only a demotion and keeping him in the campaign.[128] As if trying to guard the image of stern and righteous commanders, Eldemboo and Delengtai proposed more severe punishments, including the death penalty, for several lower-ranking officers, most Chinese, for faults in fighting against Gou.[129]

Weeks before the New Year (February 3, 1802), the news from the front was mixed. In Shaanxi, several hundred rebels coming from Sichuan crossed the Han River to the north in Hanyin on 06/12/04, which deteriorated the situation north of the river, where there had been only a couple of hundred insurgents.[130] Days later, Delengtai routed Gou Wenming in Tongjiang, reducing his band to fewer than two thousand.[131] Enraged by the crossing, Jiaqing was then elated by Delengtai's victory. He was particularly encouraged by Eldemboo and Delengtai's promise that Gou's band could be wiped out in ten days, which would make it still attainable to complete the campaign within the first month.[132] However, both Eldemboo and Delengtai slowed down as the New Year neared. In view of the pending victory, Jiaqing did not grant any awards to them for the New Year. He was not moved to open his purse even when hearing that Eldemboo had called on officials in Shaanxi to donate their "silver to nourish virtue" to buy winter uniforms for the troops.[133]

A meager New Year did not work in the emperor's favor. Staying put in northern Sichuan, Eldemboo sent Delengtai to pursue Gou to

Daning.[134] But, on his arrival at Daning, Delengtai delegated the fighting to Xue Dalie, whom he had just acquired from Lebao. On New Year's Eve, Delengtai halted all actions citing a timely snowfall, even though Xue had just beaten Gou in a battle and the rebels were in despair—Gou's men were killing horses and mules for meat, and scores of them hanged themselves on trees.[135] Taking advantage of Delengtai's slackness, Gou ran away, crossing the border to Shaanxi. Unwilling to leave Daning, in which he had spent holidays and recesses before, Delengtai detailed Xue to lead a force of five thousand to follow Gou and told the emperor that he had to stay put because many rebel remnants had come to Sichuan from Hubei. The infuriated Jiaqing called out both Eldemboo and Delengtai for having no sense of shame, lamenting that his many favors to both had not motivated either to make more effort.[136]

Once in Shaanxi, Gou moved fast toward the Han River. Before dawn on 07/01/18, Gou's band waded through the shallow river of wintertime in Xixiang. Three days before Gou's crossing, on the day of the Lantern Festival, Eldemboo lost the track of the enemy. However, he complained that the insurgents ran too fast, and the snow-covered mountain roads were too slippery for his forces. North of the river, Gou's men ran from Eldemboo again and disappeared into the Qinling Mountains.[137] Hugely enraged, Jiaqing criticized Eldemboo and his men for neglecting the enemy while celebrating the New Year and downgraded Eldemboo's noble rank and hat trappings.[138] Gou's entering the vast Qinling Mountains, in which the Qing forces had previously proved themselves inefficient, could revive the rebel remnants there.[139] At the minimum, it nullified Jiaqing's plan to finish the campaign within the first month. (Map 5.2.)

To reverse the course, Jiaqing turned to a new strategy. On 07/02/02, he issued a series of edicts to all the generals and viceroys in the three provinces, charging them with the responsibility for clearing their own province of insurgents (he listed all surviving rebel chiefs in each province). He urged prefectural and county officials to play a more active role, obliging their clerks and runners to report the rebels' whereabouts.[140] This move was meant to decentralize the campaign, making it a local affair in each of the three provinces. Two weeks later, Jiaqing took another step in this direction. He named Eldemboo the Xi'an general so that Eldemboo could command all official personnel in Shaanxi. Although he retained Eldemboo's title of "grand minister commander," Jiaqing declared that Eldemboo was no longer the campaign's commander-in-chief, as he did not think it necessary to have a grand minister commander, the highest ad hoc military position, to deal with "bandit remnants."[141] This shift was in line with the emperor's new take on the campaign. As discussed in the

previous chapter, Jiaqing had come to the realization in late 1800 that the central government was making a mistake by using central government funds to support the campaign rather than keeping it a local affair funded with the provincial resources.

Typical of his temperament, Eldemboo did not express displeasure about the virtual demotion. However, with over twenty thousand troops and militiamen, Eldemboo failed, for months, to eradicate Gou and his 1,500 people including women and the elderly. No longer having draft animals, Gou split his band into small groups, while he led 500 people deep into the forests. To hunt down the dispersed insurgents, Eldemboo also divided his forces into small units. Sporadically killing insurgents in dozens or fewer, Eldemboo failed to push Gou out of the forests, however. Every ten days or so, Eldemboo sent a memorial to the throne. Invariably, he complained about Gou's guerrilla tactics and difficulties caused by nature such as snow, ice, and incessant rain.[142] After the other rebel bands in Shaanxi were largely annihilated in the late spring, Jiaqing's patience wore out. He exploded at one point: "It is indeed strange that Eldemboo and his troops numbering more than ten times the number of the bandits cannot attack, cannot stop, cannot pursue, and cannot intercept [the rebels]. I feel so ashamed for you!"[143]



MAP 5.2. The War in 1802. Arrows show movements of Gou Wenming's band; other hostilities occurred only within the shaded area.

Weary of the emperor's constant pressure and criticism, Eldemboo turned defensive.[144] In a memorial in the early summer, he insisted that all his generals had worked hard, sometimes marching on foot in the pathless forests. Although he felt guilty for not to be able to finish Gou off speedily, he declared that he would not be able to wipe the band out within ten or twenty days, as the emperor demanded.[145] When receiving this memorial on 07/05/27, the provoked Jiaqing instantly ordered Eldemboo and Zhaketaer symbolically dismissed but retained at their positions (*gezhiliuren*). He threatened to punish Yang Yuchun as well but chose not to this time. In lambasting Eldemboo, Jiaqing ridiculed his excuses: if the mountains were inaccessible, why

were there residents in the mountains who had opened up corn fields? If the rebels, even the women, could reach those places, why not the troops? The furious emperor gave Eldemboo one more month to exterminate Gou's band or catch Gou himself, threatening him with dismissal and punishment if he did not comply. Meanwhile, Jiaqing set up high rates of reward for either killing or capturing Gou.[146] He also instructed Lu Youren, Shaanxi's governor, to spy on Eldemboo and Zhaketaer and report on whether they improved after the demotions.[147]

To a degree, Jiaqing's rage was also due to the worsened situation in Sichuan and Hubei. When 1802 started, Sichuan had only several small rebel groups, which kept dwindling from hundreds to dozens of people in a group, if the group had not been wiped out.[148] Shortly before the New Year, Lebao even had the luxury to return to the city of Dazhou to take care of judicial cases, or so he claimed.[149] Nevertheless, in the first month, new rebels in the thousands emerged in Kuizhou prefecture. Right after declaring that he had finished them off, Lebao would report that more rebels had come. Jiaqing had had no choice but to extend the deadline for completing the campaign in Sichuan.[150]

Those "new" rebels were mainly from Hubei. North of the Three Gorges, massive and steep mountains in Badong, Guizhou, and Xingshan counties had provided a haven for the beaten insurgents; some bands had hidden there for a couple of years.[151] Before his death, Xu Tiande had called on the remaining rebels to retreat to Badong's border with Sichuan to recuperate and plan for the next steps.[152] By late 1801, remnants of various bands had converged in the mountains. To acquire supplies, the insurgents either attacked civilian forts or kidnaped their residents to exact ransom. Throughout the winter, the Qing forces had had a difficult time tracking them, while the insurgents' hibernation helped create the impression of a peaceful Hubei.[153]

After parting with Gou Wenming at the end of 1801, Fan Renjie also made his way to this refuge. Now the only surviving mastermind of the rebellion, Fan encouraged the insurgents with the prophecy delineated in their scriptures that their fortune would turn around once the rat's year (1804) started, since the year inaugurated a new cycle of sixty years. Fan wrote to the rebel chiefs in other provinces, asking them to come to Hubei. He planned to instigate uprisings in Shinan prefecture south of the Yangzi because he believed that their survival hinged on new uprisings. To conceal his whereabouts, Fan had a younger brother of his, the so-called second master (*erzhanggui*), lead the Yellow Band, with which Fan had been associated, while spreading the rumor that Fan was dead.[154]

Shortly after the New Year, the insurgents began moving out of the mountains, owing to the exhaustion of supplies. To inform other bands of their movements, the rebels wrote a single character, such as “Chuan” (Sichuan), “Chu” (Hubei), or a chief’s last name, on trees or houses. Along the north bank of the Yangzi River, some entered Sichuan’s Kuizhou and expanded their ranks by coercing local residents and looting horses and mules.[155] Showing signs of rejuvenation, they assailed the Qing encampment in the night, once killing fourteen Qing officers in one battle, and even attempted an attack on the seat of Wushan county. Staying in Hubei, Fan Renjie merged his Yellow Band with the groups led by Dai the Fourth, Zeng Zhixiu, and Wang Guoxian. Unable to materialize his plan of going south of the Yangzi, Fan’s coalition moved north to Fangxian late in the second month, aiming at Xiangyang. But they were stopped by Quanbao and Cangling.[156]

If Jiaqing had not delayed his deadline for ending the campaign within the second or the third month when faced with Gou Wenming’s Han River crossing, the seeming resurgence of the rebels in the Three Gorges area forced him to abandon it. He even thought of sending reinforcements to Hubei.[157] However, for Delengtai, reinforcements were not the key. Although he had stayed in Sichuan instead of pursuing Gou Wenming to Shaanxi, citing newly emerged rebels in Kuizhou, Delengtai had not done much. Then he declared that he would go to Hubei to tackle the insurgents in the Three Gorges area, which won Jiaqing’s praise, but, while turning down reinforcements, he demanded some incentive to “encourage” the troops. Not receiving any, Delengtai postponed setting out for months, using the excuse of fighting the rebels in Kuizhou, whom he mainly repelled back to Hubei and whose size he might have exaggerated (he also used rumors of possible new uprisings in Kuizhou). When he was finally ready to set out, he abruptly and repeatedly changed his plan and moved slowly, despite the emperor’s urging, warning, and scolding. Not until the early fourth month, when Wu Xiongguang offered to yield to him the commandership of all the forces in the Hubei theater and promised to guarantee logistical support, did Delengtai enter Hubei.[158]

At this time, Fan Renjie’s coalition had been pushed back from Fangxian to the north bank of the Three Gorges by the Hubei forces. Complaining that the coalition had expanded to five to six thousand people and had hundreds of horses and mules during its excursion north, Delengtai bragged that he could quickly reduce it by half. And he did so in two battles—only two thousand rebels remained afterward, as Delengtai reported.[159] Then Delengtai had the Hubei forces pursue Fan’s coalition, but he personally turned to tackle Pu Tianbao, a veteran insurgent from Tongjiang and a self-styled

"marshal." Having hidden in the mountains north of the Three Gorges, Pu emerged at the end of 1801 and roamed around in Xingshan, Guizhou, and Donghu, attempting to link up with Fan Renjie. The core of Pu's band, about two thousand fighters, was extremely fierce, not retreating in battles even after many were killed. In battles in Fangxian and Zhushan early in the fifth month, Delengtai's men afflicted brutal blows on Pu's band, allegedly reducing it to 1,400 to 1,500. By this point, Cangling had pressed Fan Renjie's coalition to Zhushan (but Dai the Fourth and his several hundred men went to Xingshan). Delengtai decided to join Cangling to fight Fan before taking on the rest of Pu's band.[160]

The rainy season in the early summer hampered the insurgents' mobility when water levels in the rivers rose.[161] On 07/05/30, corralled to the shore of the deluged Pingkou River in southern Zhushan, Fan Renjie, Zeng Zhixiu, Wang Guoxian, and many of their subordinates plunged into the river and were immediately washed away by the huge torrents. Hundreds of other rebels and their families were either killed or captured; only a small portion of the band escaped. Although both Zeng and Wang survived, Fan Renjie was most likely killed.[162] Given that Fan was the last visionary leader who commanded respect from both the Xiangyang and Sichuan cohorts, his demise was clearly a watershed, marking the beginning of the end for the remaining rebels.[163] Having considered Fan the most dangerous rebel chief after Xu Tiande's death, Jiaqing was overjoyed, showering favors on Delengtai and other leaders in Hubei—including Wu Xiongguang—as well on as the grand councilors in Beijing, which he had not done for some time, given the long drought of major victories in the campaign.[164]

With Fan dead, Jiaqing put more pressure on Eldemboo, who had not seemed to be determined to finish Gou Wenming off in Shaanxi within the summer.[165] On 07/06/15, Jiaqing issued a sober edict to Eldemboo. Again criticizing his slow progress, he instructed Eldemboo to announce Delengtai's victories in Hubei widely, especially Fan Renjie's death. He declared that he would pardon any rebel, Gou Wenming included, if he surrendered (but Gou would be exiled to Xinjiang).[166] Afterward Jiaqing continued to urge Eldemboo to exterminate Gou within the seventh month. In fact, Eldemboo had delegated Yang Yuchun, who had been dealing with another rebel group, to hunt for Gou early in the sixth month. Having located where Gou had hidden, Yang had his men approach the spot from several directions, and they then captured Gou's wife and other relatives, which prompted Jiaqing to reinstate both Eldemboo and Zhaketaer to their positions.[167]

With Yang Yuchun progressively closing in and without food, Gou

parted with his elder son, Gou Chaojiu, each leading one hundred people. Months earlier, in the first lunar month, 1802, Gou, feeling that he might not survive, had passed to Chaojiu two scriptures and his own certificate of induction into the sect, all wrapped in tung-oil-treated (thus waterproof) silk cloth. A few days after his son left, Gou disbanded his own group, letting most of the men run for their lives and keeping only a dozen with him. On 07/07/17, when his men found some corn in an unoccupied cabin, Gou, not having eaten for days, started a fire to cook the corn. The smoke exposed him to Yang's troops. All his men were killed, and Gou jumped from a cliff. Seriously injured, Gou was found and killed by the troops.[168]

The news reached the emperor on 07/07/26, just as he had arrived at the summer palace in Rehe. This was Jiaqing's first trip to Rehe after his enthronement for hunting at the Muran field, a royal practice started by the Kangxi emperor.[169] In fact, some Chinese court officials had criticized Jiaqing for making the trip despite the ongoing campaign. Gou's death would have alleviated the burden of guilt, if there was any, proving that the hostilities were about to end and the criticism was thus short-sighted. Overpowered by joy, relief, and the emotions aroused by returning to the summer palace, Jiaqing could not hold back his tears when he announced Gou's death to the grand councilors. Brushing aside his grudge against Eldemboo, Jiaqing upgraded his noble rank to that of earl of the first grade and returned to him the double-eyed-feather hat trapping in addition to numerous gifts. A few days before Gou's demise, Eldemboo had requested Yang Yuchun's transfer from the position of Gansu's provincial commander to that of Shaanxi's provincial commander, a more important post that had become vacant after Qingcheng was called back to Beijing. For the first time, Eldemboo profusely praised Yang. Jiaqing, who had begun noticing Yang at the beginning of 1800, endorsed the transfer.[170]

The Militia Question

Immediately after learning of Fan's death, Jiaqing set his hand to *shanhou*, or "wrapping up and reconstruction," about which he had spoken many times but had never been able to do much. By then the commanders had begun sending back troops deployed from other provinces.[171] But for Jiaqing the most critical matter was to demobilize militiamen, perhaps sixty to seventy thousand in mid-1802, who had been hired by the armies and local officials in the five provinces of Hubei, Sichuan, Shaanxi, Henan, and Gansu. Having long been aware of the potential peril of using irregulars in this campaign and having frequently expressed his concerns, the emperor was worried about how to resettle them when the campaign came to

its end, because many had neither family nor livelihood. In the worst-case scenario, were they not properly resettled, accustomed to violence through years of military life, they would become bandits or join the remaining insurgents. Meanwhile, the enormous financial cost of continuing to employ them was also a factor underlining Jiaqing's eagerness to cut them.[172]

As early as the end of 1799, when the numbers of insurgents had significantly dwindled in all the theaters, Jie Cong, a low-ranking official, submitted to the throne his postwar reconstruction proposal. What gripped Jiaqing's attention most was Jie's suggestion of providing livelihoods to demobilized militiamen, either allotting a piece of ownerless land, admitting them into the army, or turning them into agricultural colonists.[173] Although he had agreed that some of the militiamen could be absorbed into the Green Standard Army, Jiaqing was nevertheless worried that there would not be enough positions for so many militiamen who had no homes to return and no jobs to do. He thus asked Eldemboo, Delengtai, Songyun, Kuilun, and Guwanghing, the major leaders of the campaign at that time, for their thoughts.[174] However, the rebels' crossing of the Jiaqing River early in 1800 disrupted the conversation. Not until after the Sichuan theater was stabilized did Jiaqing revisit it. In an edict on 05/03/15 on postwar reconstruction, Jiaqing leaned toward finding arable land for the homeless militiamen. Apparently having deliberated on the matter with his courtiers, he directed that ownerless land left by rebels and local residents who either had been killed or had left and virgin land such as that in the Qinling Mountains could be distributed to them.[175] However, the discussion did not continue, as both the emperor and the commanders were soon preoccupied by the other matters for the rest of 1800.[176]

Jiaqing revisited the issue early in 1801. On 06/02/30, in an edict on resettling refugees and militiamen, he solicited from the viceroys of the three provinces workable schemes to distribute the insurgents' land to the militiamen, while stating that the central government would not provide financial support for the undertaking.[177] More than one month passed before the viceroys' response arrived. Interestingly, all three viceroys who responded, Lebao, Changlin, and Lu Youren, dodged the question of using the insurgents' land. Rather, all of them favored absorbing the militiamen into the Green Standard Army or hiring them as *minzhuang*, the armed personnel at the local yamen.[178] Changlin and Lu reported that there was not much rebel property in Shaanxi because most of the rebels were from Hubei and Sichuan. As became clear later to the throne, the land of the insurgents was long gone. Easy prey for the local officials, it had either been sold or been occupied. Trying to push the problem back to the state, Changlin and

Lu proposed to convert all the militiamen who had fought with the armies, the so-called expeditionary militias (*suizheng xiangyong*), first to "intern soldiers" (*yuding*), whose pay was much lower than that of formal soldiers, and then to upgrade them to formal soldiers when vacancies occurred. But this was not what the emperor and the central government wanted, given its huge expense on a regular basis. After two months of deliberation, the grand councilors and the Ministry of War rejected the proposal and required all the viceroys in the battleground provinces to work out other solutions. Jiaqing aligned with them.[179] Nevertheless, no province responded. The stalemated negotiation between the central government and the battleground provinces figured prominently in the slow progress of the campaign. It was the tens of thousands of militiamen, not a few thousand insurgents, that constituted the real obstacle to the conclusion of the campaign. Throughout the campaign, paying the militias was one of the largest war expenses, and misappropriation of war funds in the name of paying them was serious and widespread. Although all the battleground provinces had long been decommissioning hired militiamen (by 1802, their numbers were much smaller than earlier), the program hit an impasse as the campaign neared its conclusion. Collectively, the campaign stewardship tried hard not to relinquish them all at once.

Emboldened by Fan Renjie's death, Jiaqing decided to move forward without reaching a concord with the campaign stewardship. On 07/06/16, he ordered Eldemboo to cut the militias and to do so before withdrawing the regular troops, because the presence of the troops would help keep order in the event that the demobilized militiamen made trouble.[180] Shortly after, Jiaqing sent Xingkui, a ranking bannerman, to Shaanxi to deliver in person to Eldemboo an edict on cutting the militias and other affairs associated with the triumph.[181] In the following months, Jiaqing reiterated time and again that demobilizing the militias was most critical among all the wrap-up matters. Harshly criticizing the commanders and provincial officials for creating this extremely costly scheme, he was resolute in disowning them. Yet he did not allocate any funds for this "extremely important" matter. Instead, he said that it was a local affair and obliged Eldemboo, Delengtai, and provincial officials to find ways to carry it out. His only instructions were that the militiamen should be given the choice to join the army or return home, and that the officials in charge should be neither too high-handed nor too generous.[182]

If the throne was not willing to open its purse, unsurprisingly, no one at the front would be generous when discharging the militias. In a cosigned memorial in the mid-seventh month, Eldemboo, Huiling (who had succeeded Changlin as Shaanxi's governor-general), and Lu

Youren proposed to award each expeditionary militiaman 3 taels of silver (with 4 taels for chiefs and those who had earned an award) and each militiaman who guarded passes and strategic points 1 tael if they were from Shaanxi and 2 taels if they were from Sichuan or Hubei. The money would be handed to them when they arrived at their hometowns by the officials escorting them. Along the way home, the local officials would be obliged to provide them with shelter and meals.[183] Given that the proposed awards were roughly equivalent to one month's pay, the amount was a far cry from being enough to launch a livelihood. However, Jiaqing did not see any problem with this. In fact, he told Wu Xiongguang that he agreed that militiamen should be given some award on being demobilized, but it should not be too generous. He was more worried about their homebound journey and their reintegration into the local community, because he had heard that former insurgents and former militiamen carried on their vendettas after returning home.[184] In the following weeks, Jiaqing kept a close eye on this matter, frequently making inquiries if information was not included in the memorials from the war. Specifically, he wanted to know whether their homebound journeys had been peaceful and whether they had arrived at their hometowns and been adequately settled.[185]

When the reports did arrive, they were basically good news. According to about half a dozen memorials that mentioned the discharging and sending away of the militias in the autumn of 1802, everything was handled carefully and all went well. In Shaanxi, Eldemboo and Huiling appointed one civil official, Zhu Xun, and one officer, Wang Zhaomeng, to take charge of the matter. In one memorial, Huiling detailed how 132 militiamen who had been under Sun Rongyuan, an assistant brigade commander (*shoubei*), were demobilized and sent away. Except for eight who were willing to join the army, all 124 militiamen were escorted to their homes by officials (51 to Sichuan, 14 to Hubei, 53 to Xixiang, and 5 to other counties in Shaanxi). Each group was given a big banner with four characters on it, *kaixuan xiangyong* (triumphant militia). Before they set out from Hanzhong on 07/08/11, their award silver was individually wrapped and sealed in front of them and handed to the escorting officials. Those militiamen, who were happy and grateful, cheered loudly. Since they claimed their weapons were their own, they received 0.5 taels of silver apiece for weapons taken away from them. The Shaanxi authorities had also arranged food, shelter, and transportation along the way and notified both Hubei and Sichuan authorities to send officials to the border to receive them. The militiamen from Sichuan were escorted by Zhu Xun himself per Huiling's order.[186] After having received Huiling's letter, Lebao sent a prefect, a circuit intendant, and

a magistrate, all of Guangyuan, to receive those militiamen at Guangyuan's Shenxuanyi, the first stop after crossing the provincial border. As in Shaanxi, the discharged militiamen were escorted to their hometowns and were provided with food rations and thatched shelters en route. When they arrived at their destination, the local officials handed the sealed silver to them. By the middle of the tenth month, nine batches of discharged militiamen had been received in Guangyuan. Scores who were from Guizhou were sent to Guizhou via Sichuan.[187] As Hubei was not a big supplier of militiamen to Shaanxi and Sichuan, Wu Xiongguang reported that only four batches of discharged militias, with twenty to fifty in each batch, had been sent from Shaanxi to Zhuxi or Yunyang via the Han River by the mid-eighth month and that most of them had families to return to.[188]

Along the north bank of the Han River from Shaanxi's Baihe to Hubei's Gucheng, 3,100 Henan militiamen had been stationed at twenty-one checkpoints, most of whom were recruited in Henan's Dengzhou, Xinye, and Tangxian, and all had livelihoods. In the tenth month, they were discharged when the river defense was taken up by Henan's Green Standard troops withdrawn from the province's western borders with Shaanxi. Each of them was awarded 1.5 taels. Following the Shaanxi precedent, the Henan authorities sent the local officials to escort them home and provided food rations and shelter along their way.[189] In Hubei, most militiamen were recruited locally, and most had property and livelihoods. North of the Three Gorges, almost all the militias had been recruited from Shinan prefecture south of the river by the Badong magistrate, Yin Yingtu. Since Yin had been promoted to Shinan prefect, Wu Xiongguang entrusted Yin to monitor those discharged militias. After Gou Wenming died, Wu cut a few thousand militiamen guarding passes and checkpoints along the Hubei-Shaanxi border. Wu awarded all the discharged militias in Hubei with some silver and rice, although he did not specify the amounts. Wu reported that they were happy to return home to farming and to receive the award.[190]

Despite generally sanguine reports, which often pleased Jiaqing, some caveats can be detected in the official correspondence from late 1802. At first, most discharged militiamen were of the "guardsmen militias" (*fangshou xiangyong*) rather than the "expeditionary militias," whose compensation was higher. According to Delengtai, there were 17,500 expeditionary militiamen in the three provinces at the time (6,900 in Shaanxi, 4,600 in Hubei, and 6,000 in Sichuan).[191] But the figure could be as high as more than 25,000. Despite Jiaqing's constant urging, all three provinces refrained from eliminating them. In Shaanxi, only 1,300 among the 7,000 militiamen who had been cut by the ninth month were expeditionary militiamen. As Eldemboo

explained, the regular troops were returning to their original units after having been scattered in different units for years so that some vacant spots had been created that the militiamen could help fill for the time being. He promised to cut all of them after all the troops returned to their original units. At the time, he had Zhu Xun register all the remaining militiamen, making clear their intention to return home or join the army.[192] In Sichuan, almost all the expeditionary militiamen (more than five thousand, according to Lebao, but it could have been about eight thousand based on the information revealed in the records) had been kept. To ward off Jiaqing's criticism for his slowness in cutting the militias—his first report did not reach Beijing until 07/09/19—Lebao said that he had sent two officials to the armies to register each militiaman's domicile, family, and property information and his intention to join the army, and he assured the emperor they would be cut before the regular troops were withdrawn.[193] In fact, Wu Xiongguang did not cut the expeditionary militiamen in Hubei either. Meanwhile, none of the three provinces had eliminated the guardsmen militias by the end of 1802.[194] Overall, the total size of the militias might have been about 45,000 to 50,000 when victory was declared for the first time in early 1803.[195]

Another hitch was that some discharged militiamen did not return home. According to Sichuan officials, the actual numbers of militiamen who had arrived at Guangyuan did not match the numbers on the rosters passed to them by the Shaanxi officials, which meant that some might have deserted before their group reached the provincial border—although Lebao explained that some might have lagged behind or had accidents.[196] Moreover, contrary to what the commanders had anticipated, most militiamen were unwilling to join the Green Standard Army. As shown above, of the 132 militiamen who were first cut in Shaanxi, only 8 chose to join the army. Among the 1,300 demobilized expeditionary militiamen in Shaanxi, only 24 joined the army.[197] For some time, both the commanders and the viceroys had pointed to the availability of those experienced militiamen when arguing for enlarging the Green Standard forces in their provinces.[198] Nevertheless, becoming regular soldiers was not attractive for those de facto mercenaries who had enjoyed more freedom and higher compensation as militiamen.

In short, the demobilization of the militias was far from complete by the end of 1802. Two main issues underlined the resistance from the battleground provinces to cutting the militias all at once. First, the militias were useful. For years, they had been more instrumental on the battlefield than many of the regulars, enabling bannermen and Green Standard troops and officers to stay in towns or villages to heal wounds or illness, real or falsified. Although the last groups of

insurgents had been small in number, they were often in places that were difficult to access. Therefore, those experienced and hardy militiamen were still indispensable. Second, there was the question of money. To the emperor, cutting the militias meant reducing war expenditures by a large margin. But for those in charge at the front the militias had been one of the most important bargaining chips for funds. More important, the pay for the militias was a source of ill-gotten income for commanders and army officers as well as local officials. The militias themselves also tried to negotiate for their own well-being; at times they took collective action to bargain with their superiors. Without generous awards, it was difficult to dissolve this cohort of skilled fighters. However, as the final victory neared, Jiaqing became increasingly stringent when it came to money; there was little common ground between him and the parties in the campaign.

In fact, a harbinger of trouble had reared its head. As Hubei was more of a hot spot in 1802, starting in late spring many discharged militiamen, the majority from Sichuan, went to Hubei and sought to be hired there. Concerned that they would join the rebels if they were not accommodated, Cangling and Wu Xiongguang admitted some into the militias in Hubei. Jiaqing also instructed that they at least be provided with food rations and not allowed to make trouble. Needless to say, Hubei could not possibly take care of all of them.[199] By autumn, some of them had been spotted among the insurgents in Hubei. In battle, they were more adept and effective than the insurgents, given that they had known the Qing forces well.[200] Although similar scenarios had occurred elsewhere, Wu Xiongguang was the only one who alerted the emperor to this development.[201] Having only become the governor-general of Huguang in the spring of 1801, Wu did not have to be responsible for the numerous holes in the account books of war expenses in the campaign's earlier phases. Therefore, he often spoke with a different voice from that of the triumvirate.

Wrapping Up for Victory

Meanwhile, the campaign itself did not progress toward its conclusion as smoothly as the emperor had hoped. In Sichuan, in which there had been no sizable rebel bands since late spring, the Qing forces were clearing out small groups of only dozens each, including those of Liu Chaoxuan and Tang Sijiao.[202] Yet Lebao did not seem to be eager to mop them up, pushing back the deadline again and again. When the insurgents in Shaanxi and Hubei, many of whom were originally from Sichuan, penetrated Sichuan in the autumn under pressure from Eldemboo and Delengtai, Lebao claimed that the total number of insurgents in Sichuan had climbed back to more than one thousand,

spreading from the borders to the interior. But Jiaqing was not too concerned, thinking that those going to Sichuan were merely fragmented remnants. He urged Lebao to accelerate the operation while keeping his focus on Hubei.[203]

In Hubei, the focus was the battle against Pu Tianbao. Having returned to Xingshan from Fangxian and Zhushan, Pu was rejoined by Dai the Fourth, Cui Zonghe, and others. Together, they dug in on the precipitous mountains at Xingshan's northern tip. Despite his promise to the emperor that the showdown was nearing, Delengtai paused for weeks after Fan Renjie's death. Not until late in the sixth month did he destroy the rebels' mountaintop forts, reducing them to several hundred. However, Delengtai slowed down again, failing to wipe out Pu's band in the seventh month, as it shuttled through the mountains north of the Three Gorges taking in the remnants of other bands. Having censured Delengtai numerous times, Jiaqing issued an edict to Delengtai on 07/07/27, one day after learning of Gou Wenming's death, telling him that Gou was dead and that Sichuan was about to be cleared so that Hubei was the only province to still have thousands of insurgents. Jiaqing reminded him of Qishiwu's downfall and asked him whether he meant to wait for Eldemboo to go to Hubei to finish off Pu Tianbao. Ten days later, Jiaqing indeed directed Eldemboo to go to Hubei.[204] Apparently irked by Delengtai's procrastination, Wu Xiongguang also requested that Eldemboo go to Hubei, saying that Delengtai's force was not sufficient to tackle several other insurgent groups.[205] Perhaps not wishing to let Eldemboo take over the operation in Hubei, Delengtai accelerated his operations in the early eighth month. Apparently capable of quashing any rebel band he desired to, Delengtai smashed the remainder of Pu's band in days; Pu ran to Zhuxi with a handful of his last men and died on 07/08/12 after jumping from a cliff. Jiaqing did not upgrade Delengtai's noble rank. Instead, he showed his appreciation by granting a yellow jacket to Delengtai's son, Suchonga, for killing a roe deer when accompanying the emperor on a hunting sortie at Muran.[206]

After Pu's death, Delengtai stayed in Hubei to clear up Pu's remnants and several other groups. Early in the ninth month, he routed a band of six to seven hundred people led by Xiong Cui near Jixinling, or "Rooster Heart Peak," at the intersection of Hubei, Sichuan, and Shaanxi, the biggest among the remaining bands.[207] Having crossed the border to Zhuxi, Eldemboo spent several weeks in Hubei but did not join the fighting. Declaring that the situation in Hubei had taken a turn for the better but the operation in Shaanxi had not progressed expeditiously, Eldemboo returned to Shaanxi.[208] By sending Eldemboo to Hubei, Jiaqing had annulled his earlier decision that Eldemboo be responsible only for the Shaanxi theater and no

longer commander-in-chief of the whole campaign. However, Eldemboo did not seem willing to extend his purview beyond Shaanxi without an official reinstatement of his position. Moreover, he surely knew that Delengtai would not be interested in sharing the stage with him in Hubei. Until the eve of the first declaration of victory, Eldemboo stayed by Shaanxi's border with Hubei, intercepting rebels pushed into Shaanxi by the Hubei forces; he never crossed the border again to Hubei.[209]

DECLARATION OF VICTORY, 1803–1805

Seeing the end of the long war looming, the Jiaqing emperor had discussed declaring victory (*zoukai*) as early as late 1801. In an edict to Eldemboo and Delengtai on 06/10/11, he instructed them to start withdrawing regular forces from the war zone and either retain some deployed troops or use provincial forces to clean up the rebel remnants. He planned first to have Delengtai go to Beijing for an audience with him and a visit to the Qianlong emperor's mausoleum and then to call back Eldemboo after Delengtai returned to Sichuan. Showing his impatience, Jiaqing tried to take the campaign's conclusion into his own hands, though he emphasized that he did not wish for a rushed victory that would leave potential dangers for the future, and he required the two commanders to explain when they expected the campaign to end if they did not think this was the time.[210] Shortly afterward, Jiaqing gave further directives on the protocol to report victory. He wanted a joint memorial signed by all—the two military commanders (Eldemboo and Delengtai) and the three governors-general (Lebao, Huiling, and Wu Xiongguang)—to be sent via the express relay-horse post that covered 600 *li* per day. Because the campaign was against internal rebels instead of a foreign enemy, a red flag should not be used when the memorial was delivered to the imperial court.[211]

Nevertheless, the reemergence of the rebels in the Three Gorges area in early 1802 put the discussion on hold. Not until Gou Wenming was killed did Jiaqing revisit the matter. He gave Eldemboo three weeks to complete all operations so that he could announce victory in the mid-eighth month.[212] But this deadline was not met. When Pu Tianbao was eliminated, Jiaqing was again convinced that the long-awaited triumph finally approached—if the rebellion had started in Hubei, it might be fated to end in Hubei as well. He obliged Eldemboo and Delengtai to annihilate all the remaining insurgents in the ninth month. Meanwhile, he added another requirement for the memorial of triumph: it must have a yellow satin cover lined with red silk. In the months to come, he reiterated this every time he received a piece of

encouraging news.[213]

Inasmuch as there would be no clear mark of the victory—the rebels had no headquarters or strongholds for the suppressors to conquer—and the mopping up of the rebel remnants would continue after victory was declared, the "victory" was bound to be an arbitrary one; it was up to the emperor to set yardsticks for it. Late in the ninth month, Jiaqing ruled that the yellow-cover-and-red-liner memorial could be sent when all five rebel chiefs in Hubei (Xiong Cui, Xiong Fangqing, Dai Shijie, Cui Zonghe, and Hu Mingyuan) were killed, and there were only one hundred rebels remaining. Only the yellow cover should be used if a couple of rebel chiefs were still at large, and, if there were more than one thousand insurgents on the loose, he would not claim the victory. He also insisted that the triumph memorial should only be filed when all three provinces were cleared of organized rebels, rejecting a proposal from Eldemboo that the triumph memorial be sent when two provinces were cleaned up and all the remaining rebels were forced into the third province.[214]

After the battle near Jixinling, Delengtai estimated that there were still two thousand insurgents in Hubei. But Wu Xiongguang was more optimistic. Having been lobbying for an exit since Pu Tianbao's death, Wu assured the emperor that Hubei was nearing the conclusion.[215] Encouraged by Wu's upbeat attitude, Jiaqing insisted on terminating the campaign within the ninth month. He was even willing to claim the victory if one or two insurgent chiefs were still at large. He also declared that rebels who surrendered could be pardoned.[216] To put more pressure on the commanders, he urged them to continue sending back troops deployed from other provinces.[217] Under such circumstances, it became difficult for the triumvirate to keep postponing the declaration of victory. At the end of the ninth month, Eldemboo reported that he thought that victory could be secured in about ten days. Receiving this memorial on 07/10/05, one day before his birthday, Jiaqing reiterated that the victory report should not be sent until only a few scattered rebels remained and one or two chiefs were unaccounted for, so it was absolutely impossible for them to revive the rebellion.[218] In fact, to make his birthday celebration more complete, Jiaqing acceded to the option that the three theaters could send in the yellow-cover-and-red-liner memorial individually a few days apart within the tenth month. But he rescinded his approval after his birthday, again demanding a joint memorial when all three provinces were mostly cleared of the insurgents.[219]

The First Victory

As the winter solstice (*dongzhi*) approached, Jiaqing instructed Eldemboo to make sure the triumph report arrived before that time so

he could pass the news of the victory to his ancestors when he performed the grand worship at the Heavenly Temple south of Beijing (*nanjiaodasi*) and thank them for their blessings throughout the long campaign.[220] Meanwhile, Jiaqing gave Eldemboo a new concurrent position, commander-in-chief of the Bordered Blue Mongol Banner, and granted a reindeer hide jacket to each of the triumvirate, while showering favors and gifts on the officers, troops, and militiamen in Sichuan. In addition, he directed the commanders to solicit the last insurgents to surrender.[221]

In the middle of the tenth month, Delengtai destroyed the band led by Dai Shijie, Cui Zonghe, and Hu Mingyuan in Fangxian and Xingshan.[222] Shortly after, he eliminated another group of several hundred people led by a veteran Dazhou rebel in Badong.[223] As Delengtai estimated that only a few hundred insurgents were scattered in Hubei, Jiaqing urged Delengtai to return to Sichuan, promising him that he could spend the New Year in Beijing if the campaign ended within the eleventh month.[224] After Delengtai left Hubei, Wu Xiongguang led the hunt for rebel remnants. In the early eleventh month, Wu reported that his province no longer had any rebels. Yet Wu was cautious. He halted the cutting of militias and repatriation of troops, thinking that the rebellion could be rekindled by even a few committed insurgents. In addition, Hubei had recently lost two commanders in Cangling and Sun Qingyuan through illness and injury.[225] Acting as Hubei's provincial military commander before the arrival of Qingcheng, who had been appointed to this position after Cangling left, Wu wanted to keep as many military forces in the province as possible. His prudence would prove sagacious.[226]

In Shaanxi, after Gou Wenming's death, only several small groups of Gou's remnants were left in the Qinling Mountains. Although they were still capable of inflicting embarrassing casualties on the Qing forces, their numbers kept dwindling. Led by Yang Yuchun and Yang Fang, the troops killed a few rebels every now and then, but there was no sign of conclusion on the horizon.[227] Giving symbolic punishments to Huiling and having Xingkui and Yang Yuchun reprimanded, Jiaqing was not too concerned, thinking that those remnants could be handled after the victory.[228] The more critical spots, in his view, were Shaanxi's borders with Hubei and Sichuan, as the rebels in Hubei had made constant attempts to break into Shaanxi when pressured by Delengtai. First, Mukedengbu and Zhaketaer crossed the border to Zhuxi and Zhushan (they killed Xiong Fangqing and injured Xiong Cui when wiping out their band early in the tenth month) to tackle the rebels from Hubei. Then Eldemboo and Zhaketaer went to Sichuan's Taiping, and Yang Yuchun moved to Shaanxi's southern border, leaving the cleaning up in the Qinling Mountains to Yang Fang, as

instructed by Jiaqing.[229]

Although Sichuan had long been quiet, its extensive and porous borders with Shaanxi and Hubei were susceptible to penetration. Complaining that more insurgents had been pushed into Sichuan from Hubei and Shaanxi, Lebao tried to impress the throne with a picture of Sichuan in crisis, though he admitted that only three bands were relatively sizable. Reprimanding Lebao for his lack of effort in intercepting and fighting those insurgents, Jiaqing kept pressing Delengtai and Eldemboo to head to Sichuan.[230] Late in the tenth month, the largest band in Sichuan, consisting of more than one thousand remnants of the Yellow, Blue, and Thread Bands, moved to Sichuan's northern border in an attempt to go to Shaanxi and cross the Han River. But they were first ambushed by Eldemboo in Ziyang and then beaten by Mukedengbu. Days later, on 07/11/07, Mukedengbu routed them again at Tongjiang's border with Shaanxi, reducing the band to four hundred people.[231] The news, along with Eldemboo's forecast that victory could be achieved in ten to twenty days, greatly elated the emperor, who lavished promotions, gifts, and awards on Eldemboo, Mukedengbu, and their troops. In the following days, Jiaqing kept pressure on the triumvirate, although he did not forget to exhort them to be thorough at the same time.[232]

On 07/11/28, the day of the winter solstice, when Jiaqing returned to the Forbidden City after the ceremony at the Heavenly Temple, a memorial arrived from Eldemboo and Lebao, who had met in Taiping, reporting that they were planning to enter the mopping-up stage and to conclude the campaign once Delengtai joined them. Apparently trying to seek reassurance from the emperor that he would indeed allow the "victory" to be an incomplete one, the two alerted him that there were still a couple of thousand insurgents in the three provinces.[233] Firmly and clearly, Jiaqing stated that the memorial of triumph could be sent as long as no major rebel chief was at large. Given that the winter solstice deadline had been broken (but Jiaqing argued that, since ten days had passed since Eldemboo and Lebao had sent out this memorial, the "victory" might have been achieved at that moment, thus meeting the deadline), he required that the memorial of triumph arrive before the recess of the central government (*fengyin*), which usually started two weeks before the New Year, so that he could announce victory at the New Year celebration in front of the Mongol princes and other guests. To make sure the memorial arrived for the occasion, which was only three weeks away, he enjoined them to send out the memorial immediately. He told them that the rumor had already circulated in the capital that the campaign was to end.[234]

As such, it was difficult to delay, no matter what the situation was at the front. At the beginning of the twelfth month, Delengtai joined

Eldemboo and Lebao in Taiping. They first filed another report and then sent out the memorial of triumph several days after,[235] even though operations were far from over. In Sichuan, there were several bands with hundreds of people each. In Shaanxi, while scattered rebels were still spotted in the Qinling Mountains, some had left and run southwestward to Lüeyang and Mianxian. Even Hubei reported a few small rebel groups in Fangxian, Zhushan, and Zhuxi.[236] Knowing clearly that the hostilities would continue, Jiaqing canceled Eldemboo's and Delengtai's planned visits to Beijing, charged Eldemboo with the responsibility for cleaning up in Shaanxi, and asked Delengtai and Lebao to lead the mopping up in Sichuan.[237]

Just days before the recess, on 07/12/16 (January 9, 1803), the memorial of triumph with a yellow cover lined with red silk arrived in Beijing; it was signed by Eldemboo, Delengtai, Lebao, Huiling, and Wu Xiongguang. Profusely praising both the late Qianlong emperor and the Jiaqing emperor for their virtue, wisdom, guidance, and generous financial support, the signers were nevertheless cautious in qualifying the "victory." Although they stated that all the well-known rebel chiefs had been eliminated and declared that the hostilities were over, given that all the rebel groups had been eliminated, they stopped short of saying that all three provinces had been cleared of rebels.[238] Not allowing the moment of jubilance to be sullied, Jiaqing treated the "victory" as a bona fide one, lavishing promotions and awards not only on the commanders and viceroys in the three provinces, but also on imperial princes, grand councilors, and all the officials and armies in the capital. He also granted amnesties to those who had been punished during the campaign and prepared to give tax remissions to the areas affected by the conflict and a general amnesty to officials who had been either dismissed or demoted nationwide.[239]

The Second Victory

Inasmuch as the declared victory was a staged one, Jiaqing went back to business immediately. On the day after the celebration, he issued an edict to Eldemboo, Delengtai, Lebao, Wu Xiongguang, and Huiling, and obliged them to thoroughly clear their provinces of rebel remnants. He was even willing to compromise the latest deadline he had set, which was to finish all the operations within the second month. In his words, this stage was like recuperation following a serious illness; it took time and effort. He warned them that they should not be complacent with their new noble titles or promotions, as he could take all of them away at any time.[240] Meanwhile, he was stricter in financial matters. Unlike his predecessors who would exempt all the money that the troops had borrowed on their deployment once a war was won, Jiaqing ordered the troops to pay

back all the borrowed money, in four years for officers and eight years for soldiers.[241] When the Grand Council failed to approve expense claims submitted by Lebao, which were apparently unreasonable or illicit, he supported their rejection.[242] Not surprisingly, this inclination would backfire.

In the first months of 1803, operations were tepid, giving no sign of ending any time soon. Although hundreds of rebels, including some chiefs, such as Zeng Zhixiu, Hu Mingyuan, Zhang Shihu, and Yao Xinzuo (Yao Zhifu's son), had been either killed or captured, the total number of rebels had remained at a few thousand.[243] As the spring progressed, more and more rebels were found in Hubei.[244] In Sichuan, the insurgents had "increased at the same pace as the killing of them," in Lebao's words.[245] As they shuttled across borders, when the number in one province decreased, it increased in the other provinces. Many of the rebels were determined to die fighting rather than to surrender, and they were still capable of imparting deadly blows on their suppressors.[246] On 08/inter02/19, in a battle in Nanjiang, Mukedengbu along with several officers and soldiers were killed by scores of Gou Wenming's men, becoming the last high-ranking official killed in the campaign. A month later, the same band inflicted more casualties on the Qing troops in Daning.[247] (Map 5.3.)

Bewildered, Jiaqing first tried to tighten his reins on the commanders by reinstating the old deadline to finish within the first month.[248] However, not only was this deadline broken, but he kept having to extend the deadline, from the second month, to the third, and then to the fourth month, as new rebel groups emerged.[249] Jiaqing was faced with a dilemma. Although he was concerned that an incomplete mopping up would risk the rekindling of the rebellion, he was equally worried that it would tarnish the dynasty's reputation if the campaign lingered into autumn, when dignitaries from Mongolia and Xinjiang would join him for hunting at Muran, given that they had been informed of the victory.[250] To expedite the mopping up, Jiaqing reiterated his willingness to accept the surrender of the insurgents. He also wanted prefects and magistrates to survey their jurisdictions and to sign an "assurance" (*ganjie*) if there were no rebels left so that they would be more motivated to keep their locales clear of insurgents.[251] On 08/03/21, Jiaqing set up award rates up to 200 taels of silver for catching insurgent chiefs, even though he was concerned that this might lead to abuses such as killing innocent people for awards.[252]



MAP 5.3. The Last Battles, 1803–1805. The shaded area shows their perimeter.

Although the throne had exhausted his options for bringing the campaign to its completion, the triumvirate was not on board. They had been silent or elusive about the reasons the Qing forces were not able to finish off the rebel remnants. When asked by the emperor, they always responded with smoke and mirrors.[253] When it came to demobilizing the militias, they fed the throne only the good news, assuring the emperor that the demobilization was proceeding smoothly. Eldemboo reported that more than ten thousand men had been cut in Shaanxi by the end of the first month, all of whom had been given awards and returned to their hometowns without any trouble.[254] In Sichuan, the cutting of expeditionary militiamen had

finally started after the first declaration of victory.[255] As more and more militias were cut, more rebel bands emerged, which did not always consist of remnants of known rebel bands. Dubbing these new bands "nameless," since their chiefs were not known, the triumvirate refused to discuss their identity.

Again Wu Xiongguang broke the silence. In the first month, Wu reported that some of the discharged militiamen from Sichuan had escaped en route when escorted from Hubei to Sichuan, since most of the militiamen from Sichuan had neither home nor job (he insisted that those from Hubei had returned home and transitioned back to civilian life).[256] Soon after, in two memorials a few days apart, Wu alerted the throne that a band consisting of several hundred former militiamen with Sichuanese accents who were led by a former militia leader named Chen had appeared in the Three Gorges area. They even used militia flags, and some wore what appeared to be Qing official hats with trappings. Those militiamen-cum-rebels were more skillful fighters than the typical insurgents; they had attacked the Qing forces in Badong and injured a Hubei officer.[257] Jiaqing was not surprised to hear about former militias turning into rebel bands, but he was alarmed by their size and strength. He ruled that any group that fought against the Qing forces be treated as rebels and urged the campaign stewardship to pay close attention to the issue. Suspecting that the former militiamen's award money had been embezzled by local officials, he instructed Lebao and Delengtai to investigate.[258]

Nevertheless, Wu backtracked days later. He clarified that the group were actually old insurgents from Sichuan "disguised" as militias. Perhaps Wu did not wish to antagonize both Lebao and Delengtai by singling out the former militiamen of Sichuan, especially when Delengtai was to go to Hubei to tackle the band, as ordered by Jiaqing. Wu was also concerned that the militiamen still in service would be apprehended if the Qing forces took to fighting former militiamen as rebels. To mend fences, Wu posted announcements in public hot spots to placate the militiamen, stating that the rebels had created rumors to defame the militias. While assuring the remaining militias that they were trusted, he exhorted former militiamen who "had been captured by the rebels" to submit to the Qing so they would not be punished.[259] Jiaqing chose to accept Wu's correction. Not approving Wu's posting of announcements, he instructed Wu to handle the matter quietly, just killing any militiamen who had turned into rebels.[260] However, Wu Xiongguang shifted ground again. In the third month, he confirmed that there were indeed former militiamen in that rebel group, which made the band particularly dangerous, because the former militiamen were familiar with the Qing forces.[261] Even Delengtai admitted, after he entered Hubei, that there might be some

discharged militiamen in that particular band, although he stressed that Xu Tiande's remnants were its core.[262] Furthermore, some of the former militiamen, laid-off military laborers, and peddlers who had traded with the armies were conducting looting en masse in both Hubei and Shaanxi.[263] It became increasingly clear that the resettling of the demobilized militias had not been successful. Repeatedly, Jiaqing instructed the commanders not to show mercy to those militiamen-cum-insurgents but warned them not to treat them too severely in fear of alienating the remaining militias. He also pressured local officials to keep a close eye on the former militiamen, directing them to punish those making trouble.[264]

In face of the mounting pressure from the throne to eliminate the remaining militias, the triumvirate looked for new ways. At the end of the intercalary month that followed the second month, Eldemboo proposed a new program, "relief through construction projects" (*yigongdaizhen*), by which he planned to hire the discharged militiamen and the peddlers who had swarmed to the battleground provinces to trade with the armies to repair city walls and build fortified residential communities in the areas frequented by the last insurgents, and he requested 400,000 taels (100,000 for Shaanxi and 300,000 for Sichuan) to fund the initiative. Meanwhile, Eldemboo also requested more war funds to support the armies still in the campaign. Given that Eldemboo stated in the memorial on this program that it was not possible to clear the remaining insurgents in one or two months and that he planned to complete the fortification projects by the coming autumn, what was implied was that the campaign had to last at least into the second half of 1803.[265]

Jiaqing was exceedingly enraged by this proposal. Calling it "extremely absurd," he chastised Eldemboo for stepping into the domain of civilian affairs and creating a pretext for more funds and prolonging the war. He told Eldemboo that a rumor had been circulating among the courtiers that the last hundreds, or thousands, of rebels had been deliberately left alive as the leaders of the campaign needed more pretexts for war funds that had been spent illicitly. He said that, although he had brushed the speculation aside, Eldemboo's proposal confirmed that there was some truth in it. In addition to another "severe reprimand," he deprived Eldemboo of his title of grand minister in attendance (*yuqian dachen*) and the purple horse reins (*zijiang*), an emblem of high honor, both of which had been conferred on him on the first declaration of victory.[266]

Suspecting that the idea for the proposal had been fed to Eldemboo by others—he mocked Eldemboo for not even knowing what *yigongdaizhen* meant in Chinese—Jiaqing obliged Delengtai and the viceroys, in a flurry of edicts to the front, to report whether they knew

who was behind this proposal.[267] They all said that they did not know about it, although Lebao mentioned that he and Eldemboo had discussed repairing city walls in Sichuan at a meeting before the New Year—but he added that he had told Eldemboo that it was not an urgent matter.[268] Eldemboo's own response came late and was brief. At the end of a long memorial detailing operations, he admitted that it was a transgression into the territory of civil officials, but he insisted that it was his own idea. Perhaps having realized that he had overreacted and given the futility of the inquiry, Jiaqing pardoned him, letting the matter slip away.[269] However, Jiaqing might have been right; Lebao could well have been behind this proposal, given that 75 percent of the requested funds had been for Sichuan. Around this time, Lebao reported sick, asking to go to Dazhou to rest and heal.[270]

As the throne had not come to terms with the triumvirate, the campaign went on, slowly and desultorily. Now and then, in blanket searches on the provincial borders, the Qing forces in small detachments killed or captured scattered rebels. By the summer, southern Shaanxi was largely at peace. Hubei was also on its way after Yang Yuchun had arrived at its northwestern tip. In Sichuan, the last several hundred insurgents had sunk into the mountains and relied on looting for survival.[271] Yet the conclusion of the campaign was postponed from the end of fifth month to the end of the sixth month. Knowing it was unrealistic to round up all of the remnants, Jiaqing was willing to accept that victory had been achieved as long as the remaining insurgents were scattered, unable to rekindle the rebellion. But he required the demobilization of all the militias, perhaps more than twenty thousand men in total, before withdrawing troops.[272] Although there was little resistance to repatriating the deployed forces,[273] it was difficult to achieve consensus with regard to the demobilizing of the last militias—the three provinces ended up proposing three different solutions.

Admitting that some of the former militiamen of Hubei had engaged in looting, individually or collectively, which contradicted his earlier statement, Wu Xiongguang proposed increasing the discharge awards to the last three thousand militiamen in Hubei by adding 2 taels of silver for those from Hubei who had no home and property; he planned to cover the extra cost by selling rebel property. As a result, the expeditionary militiamen of Hubei would receive 5 taels and the rest 3 taels.[274] After Eldemboo went to Sichuan, he and Lebao submitted a plan similar to the one cosigned by Changlin and Lu Youren that had been rejected by the central government the previous year: to place those who were willing to join the army as intern soldiers in the Green Standard Army but pay them the stipends of

guardsmen soldiers (*shoubing*), which were higher than the stipends of intern soldiers. They stressed that only several thousand among the remaining eleven thousand expeditionary militiamen in Sichuan and Shaanxi were willing to join the army and that, after they filled vacancies of formal soldiers, the extra stipends could be reduced.[275] About the same time, the grand councilors approved a four-point postwar reconstruction proposal from Huiling. One of the suggestions was to add scores of runners (*zhuangding*) to each of the departments and counties in the Qinling Mountains and fill the positions with selected expeditionary militiamen. The grand councilors planned to cover the cost by selling properties whose owners had emigrated or died and properties of insurgents, and to let those counties raise funds themselves after the money from the sales was spent.[276] Eager to liquidate the last militias, Jiaqing gave his consent to all those proposals, even though he was skeptical of their effectiveness.[277]

But the emperor did not have the patience to wait for all the militias to be cut. As the Ghost Festival (Zhongyuanjie), a Daoist festival dedicated to the dead, was approaching on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, he decided to declare another "victory" first. Starting from the mid-sixth month, Jiaqing had repeatedly told the commanders to have another memorial of triumph reach Beijing either before or on 08/07/15 so that he could announce the victory on the festival day, making it part of the celebration. Meanwhile, he kept exhorting them to clear their jurisdictions thoroughly of rebel residues and to pay close attention to proper resettlement of the cut militias. Knowing that the operations would have to continue after the victory, he agreed to allow some deployed troops to stay put temporarily if the local military forces were not enough.[278]

Having experienced the first victory, the triumvirate had no problem sending another memorial to report victory and then continuing the campaign. Ordered to go to Rehe after the memorial was sent to spend the Full Moon Festival with the emperor, Delengtai might have been especially motivated for this victory, feeding to the throne mostly encouraging news but avoiding the pesky issue of the militias.[279] Late in the sixth month, Lebao and Delengtai headed to Eldemboo's headquarters in Taiping and cosigned a memorial declaring the completion of the mopping up of the rebel remnants in the three provinces. After the memorial was sent out via the 600-*li* express post, Delengtai left for Rehe. In a memorial that was not loaded with the sumptuous rhetoric of the one declaring the first victory, the three took pains to depict a "victory" as glorious as possible, pointing to the fact that fifteen rebel chiefs and scores of rebel officers had been eliminated, and several thousand insurgents had either surrendered or been killed in the eight months since the

first victory. Yet they were careful to leave ample room to continue their operations. They claimed that, although both Shaanxi and Hubei had been cleared and there were no rebel bands in Sichuan, there could still be some scattered rebels on the mountainous borders. However, they promised that it would not be a big problem to tackle them, and all the "guest" troops could be withdrawn. When it came to the militias, they were ambiguous. They reported that all guardsmen militiamen had been demobilized, and the remaining expeditionary militiamen were not numerous (but they did not give exact figures). Stressing that the last militiamen were all veteran combatants who were "no different from regular troops," they promised to convert them into "new soldiers" (*xinbing*) as had been approved by the emperor.[280]

On the day of the Ghost Festival, Jiaqing went to Anyou Hall in Beijing's northwestern suburb and performed obeisance to his ancestors. After the ceremony, as he loitered in front of the portraits of his father, grandfather, and great grandfather, the memorial of triumph arrived. For the second time, Jiaqing declared, in an edict that might have been prewritten, that all the rebel remnants had been cleared, and the campaign had been successfully concluded. However, he did not grant more titles or promotions to Eldemboo and Delengtai. In addition to numerous gifts—which were invariably knickknacks such as small purses, jade rings, and pipes—to all the leaders, he only permitted the Ministry of Personnel to contemplate rewards to Lebao, Wu Xiongguang, and Huiling, as well as the chief court officials who had assisted him in directing the campaign.[281] On the following day, Jiaqing returned to Anyou Hall to thank his forebears. In addition, he dispatched court officials to Sichuan, Shaanxi, Hubei, and Henan to offer worship to the sacred mountains and awarded a half-month stipend to all the bannermen in the country.[282]

The Third Victory

In fact, a few days before the Ghost Festival, several memorials from Zu Zhiwang, Shaanxi's governor, and Wu Xiongguang arrived in Beijing reporting that there were still scores of rebels in Shaanxi and Hubei, but they did not deter the emperor from announcing the victory.[283] On the day of the celebration, however, Jiaqing issued a sober edict to Eldemboo and Lebao, in which he criticized them for having been slack after the first victory and urged them to spare no effort in eliminating all the remaining insurgents. Meanwhile, he cautioned them to be discreet when it came to captured rebels, making sure that no innocent people were killed by either troops or civilians who were eager for promised awards.[284]

Initially, the mopping up seemed to be on track, as the total

number of insurgents was rapidly reduced to fewer than two hundred within the seventh month; the search of the mountainous provincial borders had yielded only a handful of insurgents. At the end of the eighth month, Jiaqing was confident enough to tell Eldemboo to end operations in ten to twenty days.[285] However, his optimism soon evaporated. A group of two hundred to three hundred rebels that had first been spotted in the Qinling Mountains early in the eighth month became increasingly disquieting. With some mules and horses, the group was moving quickly toward Shaanxi's border with Hubei. Having failed to infiltrate into Hubei, it then turned westward and crossed the Han River to the south at Xixiang's Qixingba on the night of 08/09/20, leaving far behind Yang Yuchun and Yang Fang, who had been pursuing the band. Already livid about the two Yangs—he had deprived the two of their hat trappings shortly before—Jiaqing ordered Eldemboo to severely reprimand the two. Because of this band and the report that the rebels in Hubei seemed to be increasing in number, Jiaqing postponed Eldemboo's return to Beijing.[286]

As was soon exposed, most in the band were former militiamen. All from Sichuan, they had belonged to a militia unit led by Wu Tinggang, an assistant regional commander under Yang Yuchun. When they were discharged shortly before the second victory, they deserted and joined two dozen of Gou Wenming's men on the Sichuan-Shaanxi border. There were also, in the group, some surrendered rebels who had been admitted as new soldiers or militiamen but then deserted owing to their displeasure with their new lot.[287] The band was initially led by Li Biao, whose identity was not clear. After Li was killed, three people named Wang, Ma, and Zhao were in charge. Styling themselves "managers-general" (*zongguan*), which was not a title used by the insurgents, the chiefs did not allow the rank and file to ask their full names.[288] Most likely, they were former militiamen. Although it was not new for demobilized militiamen to join the remaining insurgents or form their own groups, this band consisting of hundreds of battle-tested former militiamen were particularly fierce and effective when fighting against their former employer.[289]

When Delengtai returned to the campaign in the mid-tenth month, Jiaqing called back Eldemboo and let Delengtai take over the commandership, again afraid that Eldemboo's absence at the New Year's celebration would lead the Mongol princes and other guests to doubt the validity of the victory.[290] Since 1795, when he joined the Miao campaign, Eldemboo had been away from the capital for eight years—he had even missed his mother's funeral a few years earlier—and he had sustained chest pain and shortness of breath for years. Shortly before the second victory, Eldemboo had asked to be relieved of his title of grand minister commander, but Jiaqing did not agree.[291]

Perhaps eager to return to Beijing, Eldemboo reported only upbeat news and avoided discussing the identity of the insurgents in this band, even though he mentioned that those rebels knew Qing officers by name. He assured the emperor that Delengtai could easily exterminate the band, which had gone to Taiping, given that more than 45,000 regular troops were still mobilized in the three provinces.[292]

Before Eldemboo left, Delengtai maintained silence, not sending out a memorial for nearly twenty days. Once Eldemboo set out, however, Delengtai immediately reported to the throne that most rebels in that band and another band of more than one hundred people lingering in Shaanxi's southeastern corner were former militiamen, and their reason for rebelling was that their pay or awards had been misappropriated by their superiors. Delengtai also said that the troops and militiamen in Taiping were still in summer uniform and barefoot, and they had not received their rations on time so that some officers bought winter clothes for them with their own allowances. Because the demobilizing of the militias had been managed by Eldemboo, Delengtai might have been trying to clear himself of responsibility. With the New Year (February 11, 1804) approaching, Delengtai's exposés were also meant to remind the throne that it was time for those still in service to receive some favors.[293]

But Jiaqing was not moved to grant any this time. He was dismayed as his prediction about the militias had come true. He lashed out at the local officials for not having properly resettled the discharged militias, although he admitted that some of former militiamen might have spent their award money instantly or their superiors might have misappropriated their awards. Yet Jiaqing did not wish to show mercy. He instructed Delengtai to exile those who had rebelled to the frontier even if they surrendered, whereas he was willing to set surrendered sectarian rebels free. He also told Delengtai to interrogate the new rebels about their reasons for joining the insurgents and to investigate whether any local officials had played a role. Even more concerned about the remaining four to five thousand militiamen, Jiaqing warned Delengtai not to let them know that most among the rebels were former militiamen and not to discharge them until the end.[294]

In a battle in Pingli against the larger rebel band on 08/12/10, Delengtai's nine-hundred-some militiamen refused to fight and even chatted with the enemy—many on the other side were their friends, sworn brothers, and relatives. The encounter ended with more than twenty Qing regular soldiers and officers being killed. After the battle, the militiamen went to see Delengtai. Kneeling down and crying, they stated that they could not fight against their friends and relatives. In

defense of the former militiamen's joining the rebels, they argued that they had grievances and that they would leave the rebels once they had their revenge. As for their killing Qing troops in the battle, they insisted that the militiamen-cum-rebels did not attack but struck back only when provoked. Hesitating to punish them all, Delengtai agreed to their request to send representatives to talk to the former militiamen. Led by Wei Zhongcai, a decorated militiaman whose uncle was in the rebel band, seven militiamen went to negotiate with the rebels and deliver a letter from Delengtai.[295]

Delengtai halted hostilities for more than a week as he awaited the result. However, the rebels killed all seven militiamen two days after they arrived.[296] Admitting that he had been tricked by the militiamen-cum-rebels, Delengtai nevertheless defended his decision, arguing that the killings made it justified to fight against those militiamen-cum-rebels relentlessly and that the militiamen still in service had all become infuriated, vowing no mercy to all the rebels including the former militias.[297] But Jiaqing criticized Delengtai for allowing himself to be misled by his militias and having stopped the fighting for days, reiterating his position not to pardon anyone who rebelled and killed members of the troops, even in the event that he surrendered. He also thought that Delengtai's militias should be punished for having refused to fight. Yet he tried to make the most of the debacle. By granting generous death compensation to the families of the slain and ordering Delengtai to send his subordinates to offer worship where their remains had been found in the presence of all the militiamen, Jiaqing hoped, as Delengtai did, that this incident could spur the militias to put more effort into the fight.[298]

This soon proved to be wishful thinking. In the following two months, Delengtai could not make meaningful progress in tackling the two bands shuttling over the Sichuan-Shaanxi marches. In the mid-second month, the two bands merged in Pingli and went on to Zhuxi. Although it was driven back to Shaanxi by Yang Yuchun and the Hubei forces, the combined band expanded its size to nearly five hundred by collecting scattered insurgents and coercing local residents. Having broken the first-month deadline and unable to meet the new deadline of the second month, Delengtai requested an extension to the third month.[299] Disappointed with Delengtai, Jiaqing decided to send Eldemboo back to the campaign on 09/02/18. Since it was embarrassing to appoint him commander-in-chief, Jiaqing made Eldemboo an imperial commissioner, whose official task was to examine the armies in Hubei and Shaanxi, a routine conducted every few years. Meanwhile, Jiaqing threatened Delengtai with severe punishment if he continued showing no effort.[300] Shortly before, he had requested that Saicungga, the new Xi'an general, bring an edict to

Delengtai. On 09/02/17, Saicungga met with Delengtai and delivered the edict to him. Delengtai was reportedly "in awe," "fearful," and "grateful" after reading it.[301]

Two weeks later, on 09/03/02, Yang Yuchun routed the merged band in Pingli in a heated battle in which the former militiamen called out Yang's name, intending to catch him alive; the rebels lost two hundred people, whereas the Qing side sustained more than a hundred casualties.[302] This turned out to be the last battle in which the former militias played a leading role, however. Signs indicated that the former militiamen and the old rebels had failed to mesh—the former had not been treated in a friendly way by the latter, often being used as vanguards in the fight and on the march. After this battle, more and more former militiamen left the band; by summer, only a few dozen remained. Meanwhile, more scattered insurgents joined it. Gou Wenrun, a younger cousin of Gou Wenming, became the leader.[303]

With the militiamen-cum-rebels largely out of the loop, the last remaining militias figured prominently. Jiaqing enjoined Eldemboo, who was on the road, to discharge all of them before withdrawing the deployed troops.[304] After the second victory, the demobilizing of the militias was initially accelerated. However, once the total number of the militiamen was down from twenty thousand to six or seven thousand (among them four thousand were expeditionary militias) in the three provinces by the spring of 1804, hardly any further progress was made.[305] Many of those last militiamen had no families and livelihoods to return to. And they were not willing to join the army; nor would they accept *minzhuang* positions in the local yamen—the pay was only 0.6 taels per month, a sharp decline from their militia earnings. Slowing down or even refusing to fight, the last militias bargained for better compensation for their service and the best possible demobilization package. In Hubei, many militiamen who had previously expressed their intent to join the army changed their minds on learning of higher awards to those to return home.[306] In Shaanxi, the remaining militiamen made an uproar each time they heard of pending cuts, threatening to join the insurgents if the terms were not to their satisfaction.[307] As their protests and stoppages virtually paralyzed operations, Gou Wenrun's band fled from Taiping to Daning. By the late summer, it dug in on a mountaintop in Daning. In Ankang, another small rebel group, led by Xiong Cui, had been formed of the scattered insurgents. Not reporting the militiamen's resistance, Delengtai and Eldemboo used the usual excuses—such as the rebels' mobility, inclement elements, difficult terrain, and shortages of supplies—to buy time, which earned them repeated "reprimands" from the emperor.[308]

Initially uncompromising, Jiaqing made it clear that the greedy

demands by the militias should not and could not be met, insisting that it was up to the local officials to settle the discharged militias and prevent them from making trouble.[309] But the war leaders kept pressure on him. When meeting with the emperor on his return to Beijing in early 1804, Eldemboo singled out the low awards to the discharged militias as the only obstacle to the campaign's conclusion.[310] Shortly after the New Year, Fang Weidian, Shaanxi's new governor, proposed a new scheme: to let the local yamens in Shaanxi hire those militiamen who had no livelihoods to patrol the local areas as a postwar security measure. Instead of receiving awards, they would be paid 3 taels per month. Since there were fifty-nine yamens in Shaanxi, and each would hire only twenty or thirty men, the financial burden for each would not be great.[311] Rejecting the proposal on the premise that it was not safe to have twenty to thirty former militiamen in one place and that they would still be paid at the rate of the militias, Jiaqing nevertheless agreed to raise the demobilization awards at the end of the campaign to enable them to launch their livelihoods. He asked Fang to draw up a plan.[312]

Before Fang responded, Delengtai submitted his own proposal, perhaps having heard of Jiaqing's willingness to compromise. Arguing that the remaining militias had fought for another two years after the first victory, he requested that all militiamen receive 10 taels of send-away award and all militiamen with merits receive 15 taels, that they continue to receive food rations on their way home, but that they no longer be paid compensation for their confiscated weapons. Delengtai estimated that the total cost for the plan would be about 50,000 taels and suggested collecting donations from civil and military officials to pay it.[313] Based largely on Delengtai's proposal, on 09/02/09, Jiaqing issued new guidelines: to give 10 taels to the militiamen from other provinces but 5 taels to those from within the province. For the militiamen with merit, 15 taels would be given to those from other provinces and 10 taels to those from within the province. He directed that war funds be used for the awards and teased Delengtai for being petty by mentioning donations from officials.[314] Given that numerous militiamen had been granted officers' titles and hat trappings, a considerable portion of those last militias would receive 10 to 15 taels, which was five times the increase in the 1802 pact (2 to 3 taels) proposed by Eldemboo, Huiling, and Lu Youren.

Nevertheless, this concession did not move the triumvirate to cut the last militias. On the contrary, the commanders now planned to keep the last four or five thousand expeditionary militias (1,200 in Shaanxi and 3,000 in Sichuan) until after the final victory, arguing that those battle-tested militias might turn back to fighting against their former employers were they discharged all at once.[315] Therefore,

they steered their bargaining to increasing the pay to those last militias while in service. After he returned to Shaanxi and rejoined Delengtai at the beginning of the fourth month, Eldemboo informed the emperor that he had decided to give the militiamen the same rewards the regular soldiers would receive when they killed or captured rebels (Delengtai had raised the rewards for the regulars to 50 taels per head) so that they would be more motivated, which Jiaqing did not oppose.[316] Shortly after, Eldemboo, Delengtai, and Saicungga requested that the monthly pay to the last expeditionary militias be raised to 2 taels of silver, equal to that of the Green Standard soldiers, because the militias had been performing the same duties as the soldiers. They reported that, owing to the hardship of hunting the rebels in the forests for months, about 260 Sichuanese militiamen had requested to be discharged.[317] But Jiaqing was infuriated this time. Categorically turning down the request, he relentlessly chided the generals for not showing any effort, unable to finish off two hundred rebels with forces numbering more than ten thousand. He reminded them again that the lingering campaign had been hugely costly and that the state's fiscal situation was no longer the same as before. Jiaqing ordered that the uninterested be dismissed and only the motivated retained.[318]

In an edict on 09/05/08, Jiaqing obliged Eldemboo to finish the operations in the fifth month, do the mopping up in the sixth month, and then return to Beijing to join him on the trip to Muran, again mentioning that the Mongol guests would be suspicious if Eldemboo failed to show up at Muran.[319] Nevertheless, the commanders were looking in a different direction. In a joint memorial, Eldemboo, Delengtai, and Saicungga reported that they had ordered the residents in Sichuan's Kaixian, Taiping, and Daning and in Shaanxi's Ankang, Pingli, and Ziyang to move back into the bigger fortified settlements (many residents had either returned home or moved to smaller forts close to their farming land) and asked to deploy two to three thousand of Sichuan's Green Standard troops to the province's northeastern corner to guard the local area, mentioning that more militiamen in Shaanxi had requested to quit, including some of Yang Yuchun's, and that a similar scenario might have occurred in Sichuan as well.[320] Those moves indicated that the commanders were planning for a longer conflict instead of wrapping it up in the foreseeable future. Outraged, Jiaqing vented his frustration and wrath in another strongly worded edict and ordered demotions and symbolic punishments to the three. Although he approved the deployment of the reinforcements, Jiaqing suspected that there was an unspoken reason for it, either replacing militiamen on strike or dealing with more rebels in those places who might have been discharged militiamen.[321] Despite

Jiaqing's rage, shortly after, the three requested once again to raise the militias' monthly pay to 2 taels. Not surprisingly, Jiaqing turned them down again.[322]

To find out the truth, the desperate emperor instructed Fang Weidian to report in secret on the commanders' performance and whether it was true that the commanders had kept the last insurgents alive in order to bargain with him.[323] Not surprisingly, Fang defended them: "The reason the commanders have not cut all the militias is that the bandits have not been finished off. It should not be the case that the commanders have deliberately kept the last bandits unfinished because they have had difficulty cutting all the militia troops."[324] Fang explained that the commanders were concerned that the militias, once they were cut, would join the last insurgents. However, he disclosed that the militias had not been used in fighting for some time because they had lost their incentive as chances for spoils of war had diminished. Fang suggested resettling the militias with and without homes and property separately: whereas the former should be escorted to their homes and placed under the surveillance of local officials, the latter, perhaps 30 to 40 percent of 1,200 militiamen in Shaanxi, should be hired by the local government and ranking officials' yamens as guards or runners for several months before being cut. This was in fact a modified version of his earlier proposal. But Jiaqing did not think hiring them for only several months was a solution. He thus pressed Fang for a long-term plan.[325]

Two weeks after Fang sent his, Lebao sent in his take on the militia impasse. He admitted that the last militiamen had been hard to control, so much so that they refused to fight because some of their comrades-in-arms were with the rebels, though he attributed the situation to the fact that the regular troops had become homesick and lax, failing to discipline the militias. Like Eldemboo and Delengtai, Lebao also requested more favors for both the regulars and the militiamen—that is, raising rewards for both groups and the monthly pay and discharge awards of the militias. Paying lip service to cutting the last two thousand militiamen in Sichuan, Lebao did not specify how he would settle those having no place to return to.[326]

Baffled and despondent, Jiaqing could only resort to the power of rhetoric. In a single month, beginning at the end of the fifth month, he issued numerous impassioned edicts relentlessly criticizing the commanders for not having achieved any substantial success for months and urging them to find ways to scour out the last insurgents within the sixth month. In messages to the viceroys of the three provinces, he enlisted their help in discharging and resettling the last militias. While giving frequent "reprimands" or "severe reprimands" to the recipients of the edicts and threatening them with more

punishment, he exhorted them to act on their consciences and treat state affairs as their family business, and he promised to return the insignias taken from them if they complied with his pleas.[327] The high frequency of his edicts was unprecedented, which measured up as a royal revolt against the war stewardship not responding to his orders and pleas.

Ultimately, Eldemboo capitulated. He had been a reluctant accomplice in the militia quandary in particular and in war-front corruption in general in this botched campaign, the last and arguably least lustrous in his long career. Although he had tried to stay clean, in the end he could not help but follow his peers' examples regarding war finances. Yet he was the weak link in the triumvirate. At fifty-six and in poor health, he had been reluctant to return to the campaign.[328] After his return, his condition had worsened; he was hardly able to walk, in addition to experiencing chest distress, dizziness, and heart palpitations. Shortly after he received the symbolic punishment mentioned above, Eldemboo requested to leave the campaign, citing his illness, but promised to demobilize all the remaining militiamen in Shaanxi and Sichuan, about 3,500 in total, before he left.[329]

Eldemboo's sick leave request provided the emperor with an opportunity to break the impasse. Jiaqing ordered, on 09/06/20, that Eldemboo return to Xi'an to heal his illness and that he take the last 1,200 militiamen in Shaanxi to Xi'an and discharge them there. Meanwhile, Jiaqing made Delengtai the sole commander of the campaign, relieving Saicungga from sharing the responsibility, and charged Delengtai with finishing off Gou's band in the seventh month (the other band had only ten people left). He warned Delengtai of severe punishment if he failed to meet the deadline but promised lavish rewards if he met it. As for the last two thousand militiamen in Sichuan, Jiaqing left it to Delengtai and Lebao to discharge them.[330] Receiving the emperor's word that he could leave, Eldemboo felt "better," able to assume the commandership in place of Delengtai, who was debilitated by diarrhea. On 09/07/09, after Delengtai had recovered, Eldemboo met with him and conferred on him the seal of "imperial commissioner."[331] Although neither revealed fully what was discussed, most likely Eldemboo persuaded Delengtai to stop bargaining and wrap up operations. That Jiaqing had just appointed Nayancheng, who had once again become a grand councilor, to act as governor-general of Shaan-Gan (Huiling had died of illness recently) might have worked to this effect. Knowing Nayancheng's temperament well, Eldemboo would have anticipated that Nayancheng's arrival would at least complicate the situation, so that it would be better to wrap things up.[332]

When Eldemboo set out for Xi'an, he brought with him the last

1,239 expeditionary militiamen in Shaanxi. Late in the seventh month, Eldemboo discharged them and some other militiamen in Xi'an. While 366 joined the army, the rest, 873, were sent back to their homes in Shaanxi, Sichuan, or Hubei. However, Eldemboo raised the parting awards, as persistently demanded by the militiamen. Jiaqing chose to acquiesce this time.[333] Although there were still more than 1,800 expeditionary militiamen under Delengtai, the 3,000 Green Standard troops deployed from the garrisons in Sichuan were about to arrive. Eldemboo, Delengtai, and Saicungga promised in a joint memorial that all the remaining militiamen would be cut once those new troops arrived.[334]

Three days after Delengtai's meeting with Eldemboo, on 09/07/12, Yang Yuchun, Fengshen, and Tian Chaogui crushed Gou Wenrun's band at Fenghuangzhai (Fort Phoenix) in Pingli, killing and capturing 150. Anxious for the end, Jiaqing generously rewarded both generals and soldiers, returning deprived insignias to both Eldemboo and Delengtai.[335] After this battle, Gou lost control of the band; some of his men deserted. Having reluctantly extended the deadline to the eighth month shortly before at Eldemboo's and Delengtai's request, Jiaqing was now confident that the end was finally coming.[336]

On 09/08/01, Gou Wenrun was killed, while sleeping, by Zhao Hongzhou, a former militiaman who had gone back to the Qing forces as a scout and was then captured by the rebels. After his capture, Zhao had pretended to be willing to join the rebels, becoming their cook, but tried to get close to Gou. Zhao was helped in killing Gou by another man captured by the rebels. Then the two ran to the Qing forces.[337] With Gou dead, the remaining rebels ran for their lives in small groups in the mountains in Pingli and Taiping. By the latter half of the month, Delengtai had rounded up many of them, but two leading members of the band, Wang Shigui, a disciple of Luo Qiqing, and Wang Zuojing, a sectarian teacher, were still at large.[338] Not wanting to miss the deadline this time, Delengtai sent out the victory memorial via 600-*li* express post before the end of the month.

When the memorial reached Beijing on 09/09/05, the long awaited final victory did not generate much excitement. Like the last time, Jiaqing did not give new titles to Eldemboo and Delengtai; nor did he grant many promotions to generals or civil officials in the three provinces. Instead of being jubilant and celebratory, both Delengtai's memorial and Jiaqing's edict proclaiming the final victory sounded acutely apologetic in their attempt to justify the protraction of the campaign and gloss over the embarrassing fact that it had taken more than a year to tackle a couple of hundred "rebels." In addition to the usual excuses, the apology went so far as to claim that the fewer the insurgents were, the more difficult it became to round them up.

Meanwhile, the militia question was left out, with no mention that some discharged militiamen had joined with the last rebels or that the demobilization of the last militias had stood as a huge obstacle to victory. Vaguely did Delengtai allude to it by stating that what had made the last phase of the long campaign more difficult was that the insurgents had linked up with "local bandits" (*tufei*), but he stopped short of pointing out who they really were.[339] In the official chronicle of the campaign, the editors chose another term, "a medley of folks and vagrants" (*zafu youmin*), to dilute the distasteful issue.[340]

The Last Rebels and Militias

To a degree, the last victory was again a nominal one. Although Delengtai was cautious enough not to state that all the rebel remnants had been wiped out in his memorial reporting victory, the Jiaqing emperor, not wishing to provoke any doubt, declared that there was not a single rebel left in the three provinces in the edict to announce victory. However, in another edict to Delengtai on the same day, he obliged the latter to clear up the last remnants and catch Wang Zuojing, Wang Shigui, and Gou Chaojiu, the last three insurgents whose names were known to the throne.[341] In fact, the "remnants" included former militiamen who had turned to looting for living.[342] As the suppressors preferred not to identify them clearly as former militiamen, they continued to refer to them as *tufei* to distinguish them from the old insurgents, who were then referred to as *lingfei* (solitary bandits) and *sanfei* (scattered bandits).

As directed by Jiaqing, Delengtai stayed at Taiping's Chengkou to oversee the hunt for those last enemies at the intersection of the three provinces. In the months to come, small groups consisting of a few dozen or even fewer people were eliminated. Some hanged themselves on trees. Others were sheltered by local residents.[343] At the beginning of 1805, Jiaqing began to press for an exit at the end of the first month or the start of the second month, planning to withdraw his troops and transfer the search to the local government by that deadline, although he was still wishing that the three rebels he had singled out be caught before that time.[344] On 09/12/03, Gou Chaojiu was caught in Nanzheng. On learning the news, Jiaqing agreed to withdraw all the troops, but he changed his mind days after, ordering that the troops not be withdrawn until Wang Shigui was caught.[345] But Delengtai disagreed. Perhaps longing for Chengdu, the seat of the Chengdu general, Delengtai argued that it was not worth keeping twenty thousand troops at large to hunt for a couple of dozen "bandits," that Wang Shigui was merely a "combatant," and Wang Zuojing was nearly fifty years old.[346]

Other than the two Wangs, the last militias in Sichuan were a

remaining hurdle. In Shaanxi, Nayancheng and Fang Weidian had resettled the demobilized militiamen soon after Eldemboo left. In Hubei, Wu Xiongguang promptly cut all remaining militias following the final victory and repatriated deployed troops.[347] Only in Sichuan was the elimination of the last militias delayed for nearly half a year. Shortly before the third victory, using small rebel groups as excuse, Lebao requested permission to retain the troops for several more months. Not mentioning the last 1,800 militias in Sichuan in his request, Lebao in fact kept them as well.[348] One month after the final victory, Lebao and Delengtai were again in negotiation with the emperor. They requested an increase in send-away awards to the Sichuan militiamen from 5 to 10 taels of silver, insisting that Eldemboo had actually raised the award from 5 to 7.5 taels when he cut all the militias in Shaanxi and that the local officials in Xing'an prefecture had donated clothes and shoes to the demobilized militiamen. They also reported that Delengtai's militias were in Shaanxi at the time, witnessing their counterparts' receipt of those favors and pleading with Delengtai to raise their own awards as well. Again, Jiaqing yielded to them.[349] Yet it took three months for Lebao to execute the order. Not until early in the second month in 1805 were all of the militiamen in Sichuan discharged, either sent back to their homes or recruited as new soldiers or yamen runners.[350]

On 10/03/10, when in receipt of Delengtai's proposal that garrison troops in the three provinces be used to patrol the borders, Jiaqing approved withdrawal of all the deployed troops and Delengtai went to his post in Chengdu.[351] After Wang Shigui was killed on 10/05/19 in Taiping by Sichuan forces carrying out their semiannual exercise, as planned before the end of the campaign, Jiaqing hinted at his intention to call off the search for Wang Zuojing.[352] In the middle of the seventh month, Delengtai reassured the emperor by reporting that the Sichuan forces had eliminated a group of eight insurgents, one of whom had jumped off a cliff and declared that his last name was "Wang" before dying in the fall. Delengtai's subsequent conclusion that all the rebel remnants had been cleared was readily accepted by the emperor.[353] The conflict had finally ended.

CHAPTER 6

REGULARS AND IRREGULARS

> How does it make sense for the authorities to recruit civilians and use them in battle and to deploy them to other provinces for years? I have never heard of this.… How can the military be unable to serve the country but to depend on civilians who have never been trained to fight on the battlefield? Then what is the point of having standing armies?
>
> —THE JIAQING EMPEROR, 1804

THE Qing campaign against the White Lotus rebels was a disaster, arguably the least successful war up to that point in the history of the Qing dynasty. In addition to its unprecedentedly and unjustifiably long duration and huge costs, the Qing's employment of civilians in large numbers as combat forces was unprecedented. Those civilian militias fought the rebels either alongside regular troops or in their place. What began as an expedient to offset short-handedness became a pretext for campaign commanders, military officials, logistical staff, and local officials to misappropriate war funds, which in turn hiked the costs of the war. The botched demobilization of the militias was a critical factor in delaying the campaign's conclusion. Most significant, though neglected in previous scholarship, the widespread use of civilians in the campaign triggered a discussion among the Qing ruling elites on the reformation of the Qing military system by either increasing the size of the Green Standard Army or enhancing its quality so that it would be able to tackle rebellion or unrest in any location without necessitating the deployment of the Manchu banner forces or the hiring of civilians. Nevertheless, the projected reform did not materialize, as the Jiaqing emperor eventually opted to continue using the irregulars in finishing off the rebel remnants and to keep the status quo in the Qing military system in the long run. Although Jiaqing ultimately denounced and discontinued the paid militias, he missed an opportunity to revamp the outdated Qing military system. Related to the militia quandary and its ramifications were the use of

ethnic soldiers in the war and the tactic of "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside," which has been considered a decisive measure in gaining the final victory against the White Lotus rebels. Placing the tactic in historical context, however, leads to a drastically different conclusion.

FROM EXPEDIENT TO ORGANISM, 1796–1799

Along with the paucity of scholarship on the White Lotus War, research on hired militias in the war has been scant. In his *Chronicle of Imperial Military Campaigns*, Wei Yuan portrays several outstanding militiamen but does not outline the structure and mechanism of the practice of using militias, even though he suggests that militias may have been key to the suppression of the sectarian rebels.[1] Wei Yuan states that information about the militias was piecemeal in the records he used. His insufficient description leaves it unclear how massive the militias were and how different they were from traditional militias that functioned as a self-defense force in local communities. The latter were organized by local elites, such as literati and merchants, and funded through private sources. In his classic study on elite-led local activism in the era of the Taiping Rebellion, Qing historian Philip Kuhn regards the "militias" in the White Lotus War as the precursor of the gentry-led militias in the Taiping Rebellion. Although Kuhn points out that there were de facto mercenaries—paid militias—in the White Lotus War, he leaves the impression that local-elite-led militias were more important in the campaign than the mercenaries.[2] As a result, the simplified conclusion that the militias organized and led by local elites were instrumental in the Qing victory against the White Lotus rebels has won acceptance and dominance.

In fact, the local-elite-led militias played a marginal part in the White Lotus War, compared to hundreds of thousands of paid militiamen. Before the 1780s, the Qing dynasty had refrained from using untrained civilians as a combatant force. Cherishing their martial prowess, the Manchu rulers had been on guard against losing professionalism in their military system by delegating fighting to civilians. The practice of using civilians in battle did not emerge until the last two decades of the eighteenth century.[3] In the late eighteenth century, Qianlong formulated a new doctrine regarding the differences between frontier wars and domestic ones, insisting that internal revolt, if not regime threatening, should not justify the deployment of large numbers of elite bannermen from Beijing or Manchuria, as was necessitated in a frontier war. Meanwhile, his court also made efforts to curtail the ever-increasing military expenditures, especially in wartime, which crystallized in the compilation of the *Wartime*

Expenditures Statute. As the new code rendered it more difficult to use old pretexts for requesting funds in wartime, after the enactment of the statute, the Qing military had to look for ways to bypass the scrutiny of the central fiscal apparatus in auditing. It was in that context that the practice of using paid civilians in battle was initiated in several rebellions later in the Qianlong period.

First, civilians were hired to join the forces in the campaign to suppress the New Sect Muslim rebellion in Shifengpu, Gansu, in 1784. Fuk'anggan, who was one of the chief commanders, recruited numerous civilians in more than twenty counties to aid in military operations. Labeled "civilian laborers" (*minfu*), these hired civilians performed only military duties such as guarding towns and strategic points. To pay these hired civilians, Fuk'anggan may have spent more than 100,000 taels per month, which constituted the lion's share of this campaign's expenditures and ran counter to what had just been laid down in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*. Sitting on the committee to compile the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* himself, Fuk'anggan pledged that he would reduce the use of militias.[4] The often overlooked Shifengpu campaign was, in fact, the first precedent in which civilians were enlisted in large numbers to perform military duties, showing that there was room in war for new precedents not included in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* as long as the generals dared to probe the limits of tolerance of the state.

After this first trial, the same Fuk'anggan reapplied this scheme in two other campaigns that he commanded. In 1787–1788, he hired civilians locally to aid in the campaign to suppress the Lin Shuangwen rebellion in Taiwan.[5] Called "righteous braves" (*yiyong*), those people allegedly volunteered to join the war as they were motivated by a sense of public interest. The central government did not frown on this practice, convinced that it was more cost-effective than dispatching more troops from the mainland to the island. The Jiaqing emperor later regarded the Taiwan campaign as the first case in which civilians were hired to join military actions.[6] In 1795–1796, when Fuk'anggan took charge of the campaign to suppress the Miao rebellion, he readily reapplied this scheme but on a much larger scale. Referred to as "village braves" this time, the hired civilians provided the commanders with one of their excuses for demanding huge amounts of funds from the state.[7] Although it is not entirely clear how many militiamen they enlisted, the massive scale can be detected from the fact that militia casualties in Guizhou alone were claimed to be more than twelve thousand.[8] It is not a coincidence that the central figure in all three cases was Fuk'anggan, who was known for his unscrupulousness in pursuit of wealth and his profligacy in spending state funds, and who was later condemned, harshly and repeatedly, by

Jiaqing as the chief culprit in the rampant corruption in the military system.[9] Even though wartime corruption was more of a structural problem, Fuk'anggan was indeed instrumental in initiating and developing this new practice.

In the White Lotus War, the scheme of hiring civilians to supplement the regular troops was practiced on an extensive scale. When the uprisings erupted in Hubei, most of the Hubei Green Standard forces had been sent to the Miao campaign; the hard-pressed Hubei authorities improvised a remedy for their disadvantage. Almost immediately after the first uprising started in Zhijiang, Bi Yuan called on the counties affected to organize militias. When he headed to Zhijiang, Huiling brought both regular troops and militias.[10] Days later, Huiling reported: "Now [we] have sent troops to all villages and towns, near and far, that are on the way to the lairs of bandits, and [we] have hired villagers, who were furnished with arms, to set up roadblocks and to check passengers."[11] In many places, the local elites, including degree holders in both the civil service and military examinations as well as merchants, enthusiastically responded to the call and set up local militias.[12] Nevertheless, in a majority of the cases, it was prefectural and county-level officials who led the undertaking.[13] Within a few months, militias of different types mushroomed in Hubei; all counties, including those that were far away from the sites of the uprisings, recruited militias numbering from several hundred to several thousand. As the conflicts fluctuated in the months that followed, some counties kept recruiting more militiamen.[14]

Following Hubei's example, both Henan and Shaanxi organized militias. In Henan, Jing'an recruited militias to mitigate the shortage of his military force. Wanyan Dai, Nanyang's prefect, encouraged counties bordering Hubei—Dengzhou, Xinye, and Tangxian—to hire militias to prevent infiltration by the Hubei rebels.[15] In Shaanxi, Qin Cheng'en organized militias to guard passes in Xing'an prefecture that interlocked with Hubei's Yunyang prefecture. Qin sent officials to select one to two thousand militiamen from each county, obliging them to patrol with the local troops and catch scattered insurgents.[16] These local initiatives immediately won royal endorsement. Early in the third month, when Bi Yuan asked for three thousand reinforcements from Beijing, Qianlong turned the request down but directed Bi to take advantage of local activism and resources in defending their communities. He promised to reward outstanding local leaders later.[17]

In Sichuan, organizing militias started even before the uprisings erupted there. As the uprisings in Hubei had sent refugees to Sichuan's eastern borders, but many local troops were still in the Miao campaign, the Sichuan authorities resorted to militias to keep order.[18]

After the outbreak of uprisings in Dazhou, Tongjiang, and Bazhou, Ingšan accelerated this undertaking, calling for the organization of militias for self-defense since Beijing sent no reinforcements to Sichuan other than repatriating five hundred Sichuan troops from the Miao campaign. Soon enough, thousands of militiamen were recruited in a single county in the areas involved in the conflicts.[19] As in Hubei, the local elites were active in the endeavor.[20] However, the authorities' involvement quickly transformed many of the militias initially set up by local residents to militias paid by the government. En route from Chengdu to Dazhou, Ingšan recruited more than two thousand militiamen to strengthen his small force of five hundred troops.[21] In Dazhou, Shi Zuorui, who had been on Ingšan's staff, selected one thousand able-bodied militiamen and trained them in combat skills. They soon joined the fighting. Later, Shi selected and equipped more than a thousand stalwart military laborers to guard the Qing camps in Dazhou. Those efforts won Shi increasing fame and royal gifts and insignias, catapulting him to become a powerful logistical boss in Sichuan.[22]

The Sichuan theater was not atypical in using militias in the fighting. When Bi Yuan recruited militiamen in Dangyang, he allowed them to choose between guarding villages and fighting with the armies. As it turned out, more and more militiamen opted to join the fighting. At the last stage of the siege of Dangyang, Bi Yuan and Shuliang, complaining of insufficient forces, hired more than two thousand militiamen in three days by promising "huge rewards," in addition to motivating them by "moral indoctrination"; half of them guarded the Qing encampments, and the other half joined the fighting.[23] In Henan, in the ninth month of 1796, the militias directed by Wanyan Dai "volunteered" to join the battle to repel the rebels from Hubei.[24] In southern Shaanxi, in the battle to destroy the rebel stronghold at Ankang's Guangtoushan early in 1797, Qin Cheng'en hired more militiamen because Yimian took a large portion of the Shaanxi troops to Sichuan.

Ultimately, the "officially hired militias" (*gumu xiangyong*), split into two categories. The more skilled and able militiamen were put in battalions that traveled along with the Qing armies—and away from their hometowns—and called "expeditionary militias" (*suizheng xiangyong*). Their battalions were led either by fellow militiamen or by Qing officers. In either case, they were subject to the command of the military officials of the units to which their battalions were attached. Many of those militiamen would fight with the same army units for years. Those who stayed in their home regions guarding villages, towns, and checkpoints were dubbed "guardsman militias" (*fangshou xiangyong* or *fangka xiangyong*); their numbers were much larger than

those of the expeditionary militias. If they were not guarding a place together with the regular forces, they were led by their own chiefs, who were sometimes called "heads of checkpoint" (*kashou*). Meanwhile, magistrates and prefects as well as other local officials recruited and commanded their own militias. Later in the campaign, the guardsmen militias in some places were also used as military laborers.[25] Together, the two types of paid militias were referred to as "expeditionary and guardsman militias" (*zheng-fang xiangyong*) or simply "militias" (*xiangyong*). The militias did not have standard uniforms, but some of them were furnished with clothes and hats; or they just bore signs to identify their militia status.[26] To distinguish from the regular troops and among different groups of militias, the militias used different banners—for example, the Hubei militias used red banners, and the militias of Sichuan used banners with a pattern of eight trigrams. Delengtai's expeditionary militiamen were placed in three brigades, using three different banners, the ever-victorious banner (*zhenzhendeshengqi*), the good-luck-knot banner (*ruyiqi*), and the colored-centipede banner (*huawugongqi*).[27]

Even before the end of the first year of the conflict, hired militias began to be deployed to other provinces. In the autumn of 1796, Yongbao deployed to Hubei several thousand militias from Henan's Dengzhou, who were apparently paid and used as combatants under Yongbao. Qianlong endorsed the deployment but instructed that officers be used to lead them.[28] In the spring of 1797, when the Qing forces besieged the seat of Dongxiang, militiamen were sent there from other places in Sichuan and from Hubei's Zhuxi.[29] In the late spring of 1797, when the Xiangyang rebel force approached the Han River in Shaanxi, Wang Xin detailed several thousand militiamen from Hubei's Yunyang prefecture to Shaanxi. However, this time Qianlong disapproved, deeming this move a "grave mistake" because militiamen were only good at defending their own home areas but could not be capable on the battlefield. He was also not pleased that militiamen from Hubei, where peace had been restored, were kept in service. He thus ordered them to return home no matter what point they had reached and ordered the officials who had made this move to pay for the expenses incurred.[30] But this directive was not followed. Months later, when Mingliang and Delengtai left Sichuan in pursuit of the Xiangyang rebels, they most likely took with them Sichuan militias, although they never reported on it. In 1799, Fucheng led two thousand Sichuan and Henan militiamen and fought in Shaanxi. Those militiamen were transferred to Wang Wenxiong after Fucheng was dismissed.[31] When Eldemboo pulled out of Sichuan in early 1800, he took thousands of Sichuan militiamen. By then, it had become established practice that expeditionary militias were mobile forces

that could be taken anywhere along with regular forces.

To distinguish them from the paid militias, community-based volunteer militias were usually referred to in the Qing records as "trained militias" (*tuanlian xiangyong*, abbreviated as *tuanyong*). A longer reference explains the difference, calling them "militias that are organized spontaneously by local residents" (*minjian zixing tuanlian zhi yong*). In general, *tuan* or *tuanlian* was never associated with paid militiamen, but *xiangyong* was ambiguous and could refer to either type. In fact, the boundary between the two was sometimes blurred. Volunteer militias could be commandeered by the military when manpower became scarce at the front.[32] It also happened that volunteer militias took part in actions along with the regular forces and followed the armies thereafter, receiving stipends and food rations.[33] Once the volunteer militias started to be paid with war funds, they were transformed into paid militias. Although volunteer militiamen received some compensation from money raised by local elites and the affluent, it was nothing in comparison with the handsome stipends and bonuses the paid militias received. Therefore, it was a challenge everywhere to maintain community-based militias with the support of private sources as the campaign progressed.

Initially, compensation to the paid militias was often improvised.[34] When he heard what Huiling and others had done in compensating the militias in Hubei, Qianlong endorsed the practice on 01/02/21: "Those militiamen who help in the defense and aid the regular forces should be rewarded. If some of them are indeed helpful in the fighting or in catching rebel chiefs, they should be given 'salt and vegetable allowances' and food rations. In addition, they should be rewarded in the same way that the regular troops are. This way, the militiamen will be encouraged and will strive to give their utmost effort, which will make the operations more effective."[35]

Despite being imprecise, this ordinance was used subsequently by the war stewardship in Hubei to upgrade the pay of the militias. They always reported in their memorials that the militiamen were "granted the 'salt and vegetable allowance' and food rations according to imperial edict."[36] Bi Yuan even had this royal ordinance copied on yellow paper and posted widely to recruit more militiamen, which was mimicked by Huiling.[37] Indeed, the compensation motivated many. In the third month, Huiling reported that some counties and departments in Hubei had had seven to eight thousand militiamen each and others at least two to three thousand, who were all paid "by the regular soldiers' standards."[38] As compensation to militias was not stipulated in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, Hubei officials used the precedents of the Shifengpu campaign and the concurrent Miao campaign as yardsticks. The examples set by Hubei were soon

followed by Shaanxi.[39] In Sichuan, the militiamen were at first given only stipends at the same rates as in Hubei, in other words, the same pay as the regular troops. When food prices went up, they were granted food rations as well.[40]

Gradually, the compensation to the militias became more structured. In addition to the "salt and vegetable allowances," the militiamen received both food rations and other benefits. On average, their monthly stipend was more than 2 taels, which was higher than the monthly stipends for the Green Standard soldiers at 1.5 to 2 taels. When the militias were deployed to other provinces, they received the higher rate of 3 to 4 taels per month. On their hire, they were also given a 5-tael *anjiayin*, or "family settlement allowance," which was meant to compensate for the economic loss caused by their absence from home and business. The rate would be higher if they were deployed away from their home region.[41] Militia pay fluctuated throughout the campaign. More often than not, the officials in charge were inclined to request raises. In the autumn of 1799, because of the inflation of food prices, Songyun entreated that the food rations for the militias be raised from 80 *wen* to 0.1 tael of silver a day regardless of whether they were close to the enemy.[42] Accustomed to generous pay, the militias rarely tolerated cuts or delays. In late 1797, some militiamen at the Baiyanshan front in Sichuan deserted when they had not received their pay in months owing to the Qing supply lines from Dazhou being blocked by the rebels.[43]

Following Qianlong's instructions that militiamen should be rewarded for their contributions,[44] the generals granted the militias monetary rewards after each alleged victory, though usually smaller than those given to the regulars. However, what became most widespread was to grant them official hat trappings. As early as the third month of 1796, Huiling had granted the meritorious militiamen official hat trappings of the seventh and eighth ranks, while promising them that he would ask for "real" appointments to offices if they made more contributions. Granting hat trappings soon became standard practice in the Hubei theater, although the emperor's endorsement was sought first.[45] In Sichuan, the first case of granting hat trappings to militiamen occurred after Yimian led the battle to level three rebel strongholds in Taiping in early 1797.[46] Later in 1797, Qianlong enclosed some colorful peacock feathers (*hualing*) and blue peacock feathers (*lanling*) with an edict to the commanders and gave them the liberty to grant the feathers, without making requests first, to meritorious officers as well as to militiamen who already had the hat trappings of the fifth, sixth, and seventh ranks.[47]

When hat trappings became too routine, the commanders started granting honorific low-ranking offices to militiamen. Then some of

those granted positions became bona fide. In the autumn of 1799, when he received Luo Ang's criticism that the commanders had not properly rewarded the militias, the Jiaqing emperor was prompted to take another step in updating the rewards to the militias. Expressing his concern that honorific official titles were not enough because the militiamen might still be despised and insulted by their magistrates after they returned home when the campaign ended, Jiaqing ordered that the commanders request bona fide official positions for them if they made exceptional contributions.[48] Responding to Jiaqing's ruling and indirectly to Luo's criticism, Eldemboo reported that it had long been the practice for the commanders to request bona fide positions for both rank-and-file militiamen and their chiefs. Citing Gui Han and Liu Xingqu as examples, who had been appointed "brigade vice commander" (*dusi*) and "subprefectural magistrate" respectively, Eldemboo stated that "numerous" militiamen had been appointed as "squad leaders" (*bazong*) and "company leaders" (*gianzong*) and given blue feathers for their official hats.[49]

As the militiamen were always placed in front of the regular troops in battle, their casualties were far heavier than those of the regulars.[50] Not blind to this, Qianlong had warned against using militiamen as spearheads. To show his concern, Qianlong awarded death benefits, starting in mid-1796, for outstanding militiamen who were killed, and he indicated clearly that he intended to make the benefits a rule across the war zone.[51] However, his directive was not followed uniformly; there are few records of killed militiamen being awarded such benefits.[52] After Jiaqing took command, he continued to criticize the regular troops for remaining behind the militias and lamented that, because the rebels also placed captured civilians in front of them, the troops rarely encountered rebels and killed only civilians.[53] In the late summer of 1799, when Songyun requested to be permitted to grant the same death benefits to nine militia leaders killed in two battles in southern Shaanxi as given to the lowest rank of Green Standard officer, detached squad leader, and to grant death or injury benefits to more than 480 militiamen who had been killed or injured, Jiaqing approved his requests. In addition, he ordered that all militiamen killed in battle receive some benefits as a rule and not only the meritorious ones. A few days later, in an edict to the commanders in the other theaters, Jiaqing informed them of this new policy and enjoined them not to neglect the militias' contributions.[54] Naturally, this upgrade to the compensation to hired militias would further hike the skyrocketing war expenses and provide more opportunities for corruption, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Although the paid militias became institutionalized as the war progressed, the Qing had never intended to make them a formal

addition to its military system. To the contrary, the call to disband them appeared early and often. In the autumn of 1796, with most uprisings in Hubei extinguished and others kept at bay, Pan Shaojing, a censor, accused the militias of killing civilians indiscriminately and exacting money and foodstuffs from civilians, and asked to disband them in Hubei save the ones still guarding the passes and other strategic points. Qianlong concurred with Pan and ordered Yongbao and his subordinates to carry out Pan's request. Stating that hiring and using militias was only an expedient when the regular forces were not available, Qianlong expressed his concern that the militias would make trouble after the rebels were cleared.[55] Although Bi Yuan defended the militias against Pan's accusations, he promised to demobilize them whenever a locality was pacified.[56] Following this—arguably the first—call for disbanding the militias, Qianlong issued the same instruction whenever an additional place was freed of hostilities.

However, demobilization of the militias was ill fated given the general resistance from local officials. They dismissed the militias in some places but retained them in other places in the name of self-defense or placed refugees into the militias or military labor forces as a way to settle displaced civilians.[57] As the conflicts continued, it quickly proved premature to focus on demobilization. In Shaanxi, Qin Cheng'en had no sooner disbanded the militias in Xing'an than he had to recruit more to secure the Han River and the borders with Sichuan and Henan when the uprisings in Dazhou erupted and the Xiangyang force headed his way from Henan.[58] When Wang Xin sent militias to Shaanxi to help fight the Xiangyang force as mentioned above, he was in the middle of demobilizing the militias in Hubei. Sending some of them to Shaanxi was a way to keep them enlisted. As Kuilun stated in late 1799, "The bandits go in all different directions without regularity, so [militias in] some places are cut and other places added, and some places re-recruit them right after cutting them."[59] As Jiaqing recognized in mid-1800, this was a reoccurring scenario across all the theaters.[60]

In fact, the peak was yet to come. Mainly due to the movements of the Xiangyang rebel force, both the central government and the provincial authorities called for hiring more militias, which propelled the great expansion of the militias throughout the war zone from late 1796 to early 1798.[61] In Hubei, Yongbao and then Huiling recruited large numbers of militiamen when fighting against the Xiangyang rebels. To prevent the insurgents from kidnaping civilians, Huiling relocated the residents in the Xiangyang area to the east bank of the Han River and enlisted the able-bodied men into the militias to guard the river. In the spring of 1797, Hu Qilun led a large militia force of

six thousand to guard checkpoints.[62] When the Yao-Wang force returned to Hubei in the autumn of 1797, there came another surge in recruiting militias. For instance, Zhushan and Zhuxi each hired over ten thousand militiamen.[63] After the Yao-Wang force left Hubei for Shaanxi, Wang Xin and Jing'an disbanded all the militias east of the Han River in Hubei and Henan but retained a militia force of three thousand to help guard the Han River. In Yunyang prefecture, however, 70 percent of the militias were retained.[64] By the end of 1798, Hubei had allegedly hired a total of 366,700 militiamen.[65]

In southern Shaanxi, from late 1797 to the spring of 1798, large numbers of militiamen were hired for local defense and to guard the Han River, especially at the river's shallow and narrow upper valley in Hanzhong prefecture. Mostly led by local officials, the militias foiled the rebels' attempts, repeatedly, to cross the river to the north. At the beginning of 1798, after Gao Junde crossed the Han River and Li Shu approached the plank trail, more militiamen were hired in the Qinling Mountains, including the areas along the trail.[66] The total number of militiamen in Shaanxi increased quickly from ten to twenty thousand in late 1797 to forty to fifty thousand or even more.[67] The expansion did not stop after the Yao-Wang force was eliminated in the spring of 1798. As Zhang Hanchao shuttled back and forth in the Qinling Mountains, the paid militias on both banks of the Han River were largely retained. In addition, more were hired along the borders with Sichuan and Hubei. In Xixiang alone, more than thirty thousand militiamen were hired. Through the end of 1799, the paid militias in Shaanxi may have totaled more than one hundred thousand.[68]

In Sichuan as well, 1797 marks the apex of hiring militias. As the year started, Ingšan encouraged local elites to organize more militias to guard their communities and strategic points. When Yimian arrived, he called for hiring more militias, given his own successful use of them in southern Shaanxi. Not surprisingly, only a dozen or so gentry members responded, and they recruited more than a thousand militiamen, but most of the new militiamen were hired by officials and paid with war funds.[69] In the ferocious battles in the spring, Mingliang and Delengtai used thousands of militiamen, who were led jointly by militia leaders and officers, and sometimes mixed with the regular troops.[70] Two militiamen, Gui Han and Luo Sijue, distinguished themselves in the fighting, later being celebrated as models of militia heroism.[71] Later in the year, the militia ranks swelled greatly on at least two occasions, first when the Xiangyang force approached Sichuan from Shaanxi and then after Mingliang and Delengtai led away the crack Qing forces to pursue the Xiangyang rebels to Hubei, which left Sichuan an optimal locale for rebel guerrilla warfare.[72] Consequently, many counties, including those far

away from hot spots, hired militias, numbering between several thousand to more than ten thousand. Provincewide, the total number allegedly reached more than 340,000 at some points in 1797.[73] Not coincidentally, Sichuan gulped down 10 million taels of war funds that year. After Lebao and Funing arrived in Sichuan one after another in early 1798, they had to rein in the hiring and conduct cuts, removing militias far away from battlegrounds from the payrolls. The number of militias on the payroll went down from 100,000 to 200,000 in early 1798 to 40,000 or so by 1799, according to Lebao,[74] but the true number could be higher.

Lured by high compensation, official hat trappings, and even offices, as well as war plunder, especially abundant early in the campaign when the insurgents had more lucrative possessions, many were eager to be enlisted. However, the composition of the militias varied from place to place and underwent changes throughout the long war. In Henan, most of the militiamen were farmers; they returned home when demobilized in 1803, making the least trouble.[75] In Hubei and Shaanxi, before 1799, most militias were recruited locally and were also mainly farmers. This was also the case in Sichuan in the early phase of the conflict.[76] As the war lingered on, more and more jobless drifters, people with criminal records, and outlaws, such as Guolu bandits, illegal minters, and salt smugglers, joined the militias in Sichuan, as there were more such people there than in its neighboring provinces; this was corroborated by records showing that an overwhelming majority of killed militiamen in Sichuan had no families to receive their death benefits, though some names could have been falsified by the logistical staff.[77] When it became difficult to be hired in Sichuan, many such people went to Shaanxi and Hubei. In the latter part of the war, a large portion of the expeditionary militiamen in Shaanxi were from Sichuan.[78] After 1799, the Qing forces brought the militias from Sichuan and Shaanxi to Hubei, and some of the militiamen were absorbed into the Green Standard forces, which attracted many drifters to Hubei to seek opportunities. As Wu Xiongguang repeatedly complained, the nonnative militiamen in Hubei, most from Sichuan, were the chief perpetrators of trouble when they were discharged.[79] Nevertheless, by absorbing large numbers of the lumpenproletariat into the militias, the scheme of paid militias effectively sterilized the feeding ground of the rebellion. In some places, it left no able-bodied men to be hired as military laborers, which had not happened in previous wars in the eighteenth century.[80]

Besides the militias, there was another type of irregular in the White Lotus War, ethnic soldiers. Commonly referred to as "native soldiers" (*tubing*), "barbarian soldiers" (*fanbing*), or "native militias" (*tulian*), they were the military forces of the non-Han chieftains on the empire's margins. When the chieftains were subjugated by the Qing, they were often allowed to keep their own troops. In its early years, the Qing dynasty sometimes recruited ethnic soldiers to help garrison frontiers but was not inclined to deploy them to wars, except those from Manchuria.[81] In its expansion to Tibet starting from in early eighteenth century, the Qing made more use of ethnic soldiers. During the first invasion of Tibet to expel the Zunghar Mongols, who had invaded Tibet and occupied Lhasa in 1717, the Qing expedition recruited Tibetan and other ethnic soldiers from Kham, or eastern Tibet, to join the operation, some of whom marched to Lhasa with the Qing forces.[82] After this campaign, native soldiers were enlisted to help staff the newly set up outposts along the highway connecting Sichuan with Lhasa. It was a cost-effective way to maintain the Qing military station in this new dominion.[83]

During the Yongzheng period, campaigns to incorporate local chieftains' territories in Kokonor and the southwest brought more native military forces under Qing patronage. Some of those ethnic soldiers were placed in local garrisons; their chiefs were given Green Standard titles but with a prefix of "native" (*tu*), such as "native brigade commander" and "native squad leader." They were used in local campaigns against ethnic uprisings, but it was rare for them to be deployed beyond their home regions. During the Qianlong period, the Jiarong soldiers in the Jinchuan area were enlisted for the two Jinchuan campaigns. In the years from 1765 to 1770, native soldiers in Yunnan's border marches were recruited for the Qing invasions of Myanmar. When deployed, the ethnic troops were usually compensated but always at rates lower than those for bannermen and Green Standard troops,[84] though the emperor granted benefits to them ad libitum from time to time.

Although enlisting ethnic soldiers in frontier wars became a fixture in the Qing westward and southwestward expansions, the state did not try to institutionalize this practice until the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, which contained specific rules for compensating ethnic soldiers deployed in wars. Ethnic soldiers were now entitled to almost all the wartime allowances and bonuses that bannermen and Green Standard soldiers had been receiving for decades, albeit at reduced rates for some of the benefits. For food rations and "salt and vegetable allowances," they were entitled to the same amounts as the Green Standard soldiers (0.83 *sheng* per day for the former and 1.3 taels per month for the latter).[85] The noticeable elevation of the treatment of

ethnic soldiers signaled an important yet subtle change in the Qing military strategy. Instead of using them as a convenient and inexpensive tool to help keep order in their home regions, the Qing was in a position to use them as mercenaries. Given that their combat capacity and endurance often surpassed that of the regular troops, including bannermen, it was more cost-effective to use them in wars, even with their compensation increased, than deploying the regulars.

Indeed, more deployments of ethnic soldiers occurred in the last two decades of the eighteenth century, often beyond their home regions. Famed for their bravery, Jiarong soldiers were repeatedly deployed during this period. After the second Jinchuan war, thousands of subjugated Jiarong soldiers were coopted into military colonies set up in Jinchuan. Paid by the state, those Jiarong soldiers were referred to as "barbarian soldiers of military colonies" (*tunfan*).[86] In the early 1780s, they were sent to Gansu to put down two Muslim uprisings. A few years later, they were deployed to Taiwan to suppress the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion. Right after that, the Jinchuan soldiers joined the campaign in Vietnam to quell a rebellion. In its last far-flung frontier war to invade the Gurkha kingdom in 1792, the Qianlong emperor was reluctant to deploy Manchu forces as well as Green Standard troops from afar. Consequently, Jiarong and Tibetan soldiers constituted half of the fifteen to sixteen thousand forces deployed; only 1,100 bannermen (100 *baturu* and 1,000 Solon soldiers) were sent from Manchuria.[87] In all those wars, the Jiarong troops proved their worth, even though it was sometimes difficult for them to acclimate themselves to local conditions. Impressed by their valor, Qianlong praised them and rewarded them with titles and gifts.[88]

During the Qianlong–Jiaqing transition, the practice continued. In the campaign to suppress the Miao rebellion, the Gelao people in Guizhou were enlisted.[89] In the White Lotus War, a variety of ethnic soldiers were deployed. In southwestern Hubei, Bizika soldiers were used to fight against the rebels of Changyang.[90] In the spring of 1797, Wesibu, then Shaanxi's administrative commissioner, instructed several Muslim leaders in Xi'an to select and hire 300 stalwart Muslims and send them to join the Qing forces. Wesibu intended to hire more Muslims, but Qianlong was opposed to hiring too many from the Muslim community in Xi'an.[91] Jiarong and Tibetan soldiers of western Sichuan were deployed multiple times. The first time was early in 1797 when native soldiers from Chuosijia were sent to Dazhou.[92] In 1799, Lebao summoned 450 Jinchuan soldiers shortly before he was dismissed. Those Jinchuan soldiers were taken by Eldemboo and followed him for about a year before they were repatriated in the autumn of 1800.[93] At the end of 1799, Adisi

deployed 200 native troops from Jinchuan and took them to Daning.[94] After the rebel crossing of the Jialing River, Kuilun ordered the deployment of 3,600 native soldiers from western Sichuan, although it is not clear how many actually arrived at the front.[95] Despite their small numbers, the Jiarong and Tibetan soldiers were highly prized; they were praised as the most effective along with the Solon soldiers from Jilin.[96]

A new experience was the deployment of Salar Muslim soldiers of Gansu's Xunhua subprefecture. Although they had been used by the Qing in several local campaigns, including to suppress two Muslim uprisings, the Salar soldiers had not been deployed beyond their home region.[97] In the spring of 1797, when the Xiangyang rebels penetrated Shaanxi on their way to Sichuan, Yimian, while in Dazhou, deployed two thousand Salar soldiers to Shaanxi in addition to other reinforcements. Those Salar soldiers were anxiously awaited by the commanders. Nevertheless, they did not arrive until the late summer; Lu Youren, the acting governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, was blamed for the delay and thus dismissed.[98] However, the delay suggests some resistance on the Salar side. After their arrival, the Salar soldiers, led by Han Guangzu, a "native brigade vice commander," were immediately sent to Sichuan and then led away by Mingliang to Hubei to pursue the Xiangyang rebels. They fought hard and were especially adept at operations in mountainous areas. However, they were said to be intractable, causing disciplinary problems. Meanwhile, not acclimated to the hot summer in central China (the weather was comfortable in Xunhua almost year round), many contracted diseases, resulting in more than four hundred mortalities, including Han Guangzu himself. In early 1798, the remainder of the expedition was sent back to Xunhua.[99]

In the late spring of 1799, the Salar troops were deployed again when two groups of rebels, the Blue Band and the White Band, approached Gansu's southern marches from Sichuan. The story pieced together from the official records goes as follows: Han Sige, a Salar leader, made repeated requests to go to the front and fight the rebels invading their home province. Han was remorseful about the Salar soldiers' early return the previous year and vowed to redeem them this time. In view of their unruliness in the past, Guwangheo turned down his request. However, Han Sige and his son, Han San'ge, led a group of Salar soldiers and set out to the front. On learning of this, both Guwangheo and Songyun sent officials, including a Muslim expert, to escort them. In the mid-fifth month, 498 Salar troops, instead of 1,000 as Han Sige had claimed, arrived at Guwangheo's headquarters and joined the battle in Jiezhou.[100]

Although it is not possible to know whether the Salar indeed

volunteered to join the campaign, that fewer than five hundred Salar troops made it to the front betrays some cracks in the story. It is more likely that, suspecting that Jiaqing might not have approved the deployment, Guwangheo and Songyun created a fait accompli. Having inquired about it from Lu Youren, who had returned to Beijing for a new post, Jiaqing endorsed this deployment, as this time it was for "defending their home province." But he instructed Songyun and Hengšui to discipline them carefully and reward them generously. In fact, both Songyun and Guwangheo had granted them silver and reimbursed the travel expenses prepaid by Han Sige. After Gansu was cleared of rebels in the summer of 1799, Jiaqing ordered that Guwangheo retain them for the time being and granted lower Green Standard officers' hat trappings to Han Sige and other Salar chiefs for their contributions and good discipline, although Guwangheo had already awarded them in cash and gifts such as sheep and tea.[101]

The Salar showed, allegedly, a willingness to stay put for a while but indicated that they did not wish to be sent to Shaanxi and Sichuan, where they would be susceptible to diseases. Guwangheo sent a local official, who was familiar with Salar affairs, to supervise them.[102] A few months later, in the ninth month, Han Sige went to Guwangheo and requested to return home, citing the hot, wet climate in Gansu's Qinzhou and Huizhou, which had caused many soldiers to fall ill. The request was approved first by Guwangheo and then by the throne; the former prepared travel funds and arranged boarding and escort.[103] Nevertheless, their return was stalled, as Songyun ordered them to rush to southern Shaanxi and guard the Han River. When the Salar soldiers arrived in Hanzhong early in the tenth month, Songyun met with them and granted them winter clothes and hats. As he had to go to the river's farther upper valley, Songyun let Qingcheng, who had been escorted to Songyun for interrogation, lead those Salar soldiers.[104]

Jiaqing was highly irate at Songyun's arrangements. First, he did not think it was judicious to deploy the unruly Salar soldiers against their will when other reinforcements had been sent to Shaanxi. Second, and more important, Jiaqing thought that it was especially unacceptable to let Qingcheng, a dismissed official under investigation, lead them, for the Salar soldiers would show contempt toward Qingcheng. However, as the Salar had already arrived in Shaanxi, Jiaqing did not order their withdrawal. Instead, he warned that they should not be forced to fight against their will and instructed that they be sent home when it became possible.[105] On receiving Jiaqing's edict, Songyun instantly called the Salar soldiers back to Hanzhong and then sent officials to escort them back to Xunhua. Enraged again by Songyun's response, Jiaqing chided him for being

inconsistent. This incident further sullied Jiaqing's impression of Songyun, which had become increasingly negative; he was dismissed soon after. To placate the Salar, after they reached home without causing trouble en route, Jiaqing awarded them with cash and gifts and exempted them from paying back 3,000 taels of silver that they had owed.[106]

Early in 1800, Guwangheo also deployed seven hundred Alashan Mongol troops from southwestern Mongolia to Gansu, but Jiaqing ordered their immediate return and reproached Guwangheo.[107] For fear of touching off new disturbances on the northwest frontier, where feuds among different ethnic peoples were not uncommon, both Qianlong and Jiaqing had been circumspect in using ethnic soldiers from the region.[108] In the campaign's long concluding phase, the Qing made no new deployment of ethnic soldiers.

Unlike paid militias, the ethnic soldiers were summoned to the campaign as the empire's subjugated members. Once deployed, they were under close surveillance, including during their journeys to and from the front, even though they were generously compensated and rewarded. In the past, it had occurred that native military forces fought for the Qing empire at one time but fought against it at others. Sometimes their rapport with Qing frontier officials was a factor in their obedience and service.[109] Therefore, ethnic soldiers were another group of irregulars who represented a dilemma for the Qing; they were both valuable soldiers and potential troublemakers. In the White Lotus War, they were not numerous, and most of them were repatriated early. Yet they were not an isolated case but one of the indicators of the changing Qing military strategy that continued into the nineteenth century.

"STRENGTHENING THE WALLS AND CLEARING THE COUNTRYSIDE"

Another widespread cliché about the White Lotus War is the magical effect of the tactic of "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside" (*jianbi qingye*). The assertion is that the rebellion was not extinguished until the civilians in the battleground areas built forts and stowed their foodstuffs, domestic and draft animals, and other belongings so that the rebels were drained of their supplies. There are two versions with regard to the author of these tactics. One features Gong Jinghan, a prefect in Shaanxi, who wrote an essay in 1797 to advocate this scheme.[110] As claimed by some of his biographies, his suggestion was adopted and became key to the suppression of the rebels. This line has been echoed by historians in the twentieth century.[111] The other version, not as well known as Gong's, has Lebao as the tactic's inventor. Nevertheless, the records from the war reveal

a different scenario and do not support either of the two as the initiator of the tactic.

In fact, building forts on mountaintops to shield local people and their belongings in times of upheaval was a time-honored practice, used long before this rebellion. It was especially widespread in central China, where many mountain ranges provided optimal conditions for fortification. During the Mongol conquest and the Ming–Qing transition, civilians built numerous forts in the Qinling, Daba, and Wudang mountain ranges, all of which became battlegrounds during the White Lotus War.[112] The so-called forts (*baozhai* or *zhaibao*) were basically stone ramparts on hilltops or other perilous points. Within the walls, cabins and storage cells were built for individual households; bigger forts could shelter thousands of households. The forts usually had specific names—after their location, such as "Five Peak Fort" (Wufengzhai), or their founders, such as "Wang Family Fort" (Wangjiazhai)—or names with auspicious meanings, as in "Protected by Heaven Fort" (Tianbaozhai). At the time of the White Lotus War, some of those forts were still usable, especially in eastern Sichuan.[113]

In the White Lotus War, fort building began in Hubei. In the spring of 1797, the residents of Nanshan in Xiangyang went up to the mountaintops, building walls and straw sheds, and digging moats. Each of the mountaintop forts sheltered hundreds to thousands of households. Guarding their forts with merely knives and spears, the residents were incapable of fighting the rebels. Instead, they gave foodstuffs and draft animals to the rebels when the latter approached the forts exacting supplies. As requested by the civilians, Huiling sent twenty soldiers, led by a company commander, to each of the forts to help them.[114] In the autumn of the year, when the Yao-Wang force returned to Hubei attempting to take Xiangyang, Liang Yougu, a Xiangyang native and a magistrate in Guangxi taking sick leave at home, with his son initiated fort building at Chengshaodu near the city of Xiangyang and allegedly sheltered more than one hundred thousand people. The Liangs also organized militias to man checkpoints around the forts.[115] Fortunately, Mingliang and Delengtai soon repulsed the Yao-Wang force away from the Xiangyang area, and peace and order were restored.

The Liangs' activism inspired the two generals, however. On their way to Shaanxi to pursue the rebels, Mingliang and Delengtai memorialized the throne and suggested building fortified communities in large towns as well as in the countryside, each of which could house dozens of villages including the households scattered in the nearby areas, totaling thirty to forty thousand people. They planned to assign a few officials, aided by gentry members and senior people, to

lead each of those communities, to recruit “stalwart members” from each family, and to hire militiamen from among the refugees to guard them. Thus, the rebels would be deprived of their supply of both matériel and manpower, and a few sectarian members among the residents could also be brought under surveillance. Although recognizing some value in their motion, Qianlong was concerned that fort building and relocation would overburden the people who had already been plagued by the upheaval. Repudiating the plan as “impractical,” he criticized the two commanders for overstepping their authority into civilian affairs and gave them a “severe reprimand.” Although Mingliang and Delengtai had already instructed Wang Xin and Qin Cheng’en to set their hands to this matter in northwestern Hubei and southeastern Shaanxi, Qianlong’s disapproval apparently held the first call for fortification in abeyance.[116] Nevertheless, in places bearing the brunt of the conflict, civilians continued using fortification to protect themselves, and sometimes officials, from the provincial to county levels, also took the initiative or intervened in the undertaking.[117]

After Qianlong’s passing, the Jiaqing emperor showed inconsistency toward fortification, not dissimilar to his attitude toward the use of militias, as will be discussed below. In early 1799, a commoner named Li Ji submitted three treatises to the throne on the suppression campaign. Li’s suggestions were pedantic, replicating the clichés in popular military treatises, including merging small villages into big villages. Deeming them “impractical,” the Grand Council rejected all his suggestions.[118] Not until Songyun advocated for it did the Jiaqing administration become interested in fortification. On his arrival in Shaanxi in the late spring of 1799, Songyun forcefully pushed for building fortresses, holding it would be a key measure in crushing the rebels. Not seeing much potential in the insurgents, Songyun suggested organizing the residents in the forts to fight against them, so that the final victory could be achieved sooner, and rewarding those who killed rebels or captured their chiefs.[119] Shortly after, on 04/06/03, Jiaqing issued a decree to Lebao, Songyun, and Wu Xiongguang, and called for carrying out “strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside”—he used this term—in Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Henan (Hubei was free of insurgents at this moment). He stated that he was inspired by a story in Hubei: when the Xiangyang rebels moved through Suizhou, the residents there avoided devastation as they had dug deep moats and built earth ramparts to guard their villages. Saying that fortification “is a good method in defending local areas, and [it] has been effective when implemented,” he called for building forts wherever conditions made it possible.[120] The editors of the official chronicle of the campaign praised Jiaqing’s decision,

naming this decree as a critical factor in the final victory over the rebels: “Thereafter all three provinces built forts, which had great effect, so much so that the method of ‘strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside’ [functioned] to wipe out hundreds of thousands fierce bandits.”[121]

If this decree is taken by itself, it indeed supports the editors’ assertion that Jiaqing should be credited as the initiator of the tactic. Nevertheless, not atypically, Jiaqing soon showed doubts about it. A few months later, in the tenth month, Jiaqing repudiated Nayancheng’s motion that the residents in the Qinling Mountains be ordered to build walls or forts and dig moats since the troops were not sufficient to guard all the paths in the massive mountains, and it would also help prevent new uprisings.[122] In addition to his skepticism about this measure, Jiaqing blamed Nayancheng for his transgression, reminiscent of Qianlong’s reaction to Mingliang and Delengtai’s motion two years earlier: “As for the method of fort building and moat digging, although they are ways of stopping the bandits, if they can run desperately, not even obstructed by stiff peaks and huge plains, how can small moats stop them? It is all right if this is done by local officials, but commanders should take the fight against the bandits as the main task. Do not be distracted by this.”[123]About the same time, Jiaqing also shrugged off a proposal from Minghing, who had led the defense of the seat of Kaixian for half a year. Minghing suggested supporting the local residents’ spontaneous fort building in Sichuan by setting up regulations; tapping the militias to guard the forts by granting them titles, awards, and casualty benefits; and sending a lower-ranking officer and a few soldiers to each fort to help fight against the rebels. But Jiaqing thought his idea “useless” and “a waste of people’s energy” and said that there were insufficient troops to be sent to all such places.[124]

Nevertheless, Jiaqing shifted his attitude in less than one month. At the end of 1799, when he was more optimistic about the final victory, he became more enthusiastic about fortification, calling it “the best method” to debilitate the insurgents. He instructed Eldemboo and Nayancheng to encourage the people to build forts, although he did not expect them to join the fighting.[125] However, shortly after, again using the reason that the war had neared its end, he told Changlin, the new governor-general in Shaanxi, not to give too much emphasis to fort building.[126] In the late spring of 1800, Jiaqing turned down Taibu’s initiative of building huge forts in the plank trail area within which civilians could build their own houses, calling it “not a pressing thing at the present,” for the insurgents were far away from western Shaanxi. He was also not happy about Taibu’s inclination to spend war funds for this project, since Taibu promised financial aid for the

less affluent.[127] Not until the summer of 1800, when Jiaqing was trying to meet his new deadline to finish the war before the winter, did he praise Sichuan for fortification and urge Shaanxi to mimic Sichuan in building forts and organizing militias to guard them.[128]

Despite the conflicting directives from the throne, Songyun spearheaded fort building in Shaanxi and Gansu. He encouraged setting up regulations for it and instructed the local officials to help residents select locations and to provide them with equipment, know-how, and other information.[129] Both Nayancheng and Taibu shared Songyun's enthusiasm after they arrived. As Shaanxi's governor, Taibu made fortification one of his priorities and often discussed it in his memorials during his one-year tenure. Despite Jiaqing's disapproval noted above, Nayancheng urged residents to build forts in the Qinling Mountains, especially in Wulang, Xiaoyi, and Zhen'an—some forts are still visible in Zhen'an today.[130] The successors to Songyun and Taibu, Changlin and Lu Youren, continued this undertaking.[131] In southeastern Gansu, under Guwangheo's auspices, many forts were built to store foodstuffs, but Gansu was largely at peace after the Gao-Ma band and the Wu Family Regiment left the province in the late summer of 1800.[132]

Yet fortification in Shaanxi was never a success. Without funds allocated to the project, local officials had neither the means nor the incentive to implement it, and local residents were not keen on it either. When Taibu was in charge, he managed to get some rich families and local officials to pay for fort-building projects, but they were not popular. By early 1801, some forts were built along the arteries in southern Shaanxi and south of the Han River as well as in Xi'an, Tongzhou, and Fengxiang prefectures, outside the usual perimeters of the conflicts, but few were built in the Qinling Mountains west of Wulang, where the population was sparse but the area was frequented by insurgents of various groups.[133] More particularly, the owners of the numerous workshops in the mountains were reluctant to join in the effort of fort building. Therefore, the large quantities of supplies stored in those workshops for their employees, mostly so-called shed people, often hundreds in each workshop, could still end up being looted by the insurgents.[134] Early in 1801, Lu Youren proposed forcing the scattered households in the mountains to move away and letting the local officials resettle them so the rebels would lose this source of supplies. Jiaqing was adamantly opposed, as the residents would be uprooted, and yamen clerks and runners would have the opportunity to disturb and blackmail them. He questioned Lu on how he would resettle them if it was already difficult to settle refugees and cautioned that dislocated mountain residents would join the insurgents were they not adequately

relocated. He had Lu reprimanded for submitting a "worthless" proposal.[135]

In Hubei, the provincial authorities did not start pushing for fortification until 1800, when Jiang Sheng became governor-general. However, with no spare funds from the province to support the project, it progressed slowly; only about half of the residents in western Hubei responded to the call to build forts, Jiang Sheng estimated. In the northwest border areas, fortifications in Yunxi and Zhushan were serviceable, thanks to Kong Jigan and Fan Jichang, the two able magistrates there, but there were many soft spots in Zhuxi, given its long borders with Shaanxi and Sichuan.[136] Succeeding Jiang Sheng in early 1801, Šulin seemed not to be keen on fortification, although he gave some funds to it and charged local officials with supervising the undertaking (he also intended to move the people in smaller forts into bigger ones). Yet it was difficult for the sparsely populated areas to carry it out, according to Šulin.[137] When Wu Xiongguang took over in mid-1801, he noted that few forts had been built in Yunyang prefecture.[138] One year later, Wu again expressed his pessimism about the project, saying that many residents in Yunyang and Yichang were immigrants who rented hillside land to live on and could not afford to build forts, and the government did not have funds to support it.[139]

Among the battleground provinces, Sichuan stood out in fortification, primarily because there were numerous old forts, called "mountain forts" (*shanzhai*) or "forts and caves" (*zhaidong*), left from the past. As the people in rural Sichuan did not live in villages but built their homes by their fields, they were susceptible to the rebels' assaults and pillages. From early in the war, they went up to the hilltops, either making use of the old forts or building new ones.[140] By late 1798, many residents had fortified themselves on the mountains and moved their foodstuffs and belongings into the forts. Some forts could house more than ten thousand people. To defend the forts, the residents organized militias and selected their chiefs.[141] As Kuilun reported at the beginning of 1800, fortification made it harder for the rebels to obtain supplies so that they had to go to Shaanxi and Hubei. Although Kuilun tried to show off his effort in encouraging fortification, he admitted, too, that, although the bigger and well-fortified forts could secure their residents' lives and belongings, the people in the smaller forts did not dare to fight against the rebels but sent them away by throwing out foodstuffs or trading with them. He also complained that it had become difficult for the authorities to hire able-bodied men for the militias, as they were now needed for guarding their own forts.[142]

By the end of 1800, only a few hundred insurgents were left in

Sichuan, and they retreated to the mountainous borders with Shaanxi and Hubei. With Sichuan largely at peace, Jiaqing accepted the view that the local people's spontaneous fortification efforts in Sichuan had rendered it impossible for the rebels to stay put so that they went to either Hubei or Shaanxi. Repeatedly, he praised Sichuan and criticized Shaanxi for the lack of effort in fortification and organizing militias. He then entertained the idea of forcing all insurgent groups to Sichuan to round them up there.[143] Therefore, during 1801 and 1802, Jiaqing constantly pushed Shaanxi and Hubei to boost their effort in fort building, ready to send competent prefects and magistrates from other places if the local officials could not meet the challenge. He even ordered Shaanxi to dig moats and break up roads at the entrances to the Qinling Mountains, which had been suggested by Nayancheng but rebuked by him a year earlier.[144] When Changlin expressed his concern that weapons in the forts would become a safety hazard once peace was restored and proposed keeping track of them so that postwar demilitarization would be easier, Jiaqing agreed with him but did not endorse the proposal for fear of provoking new unrest. Instead, he cautioned Changlin to keep this idea to himself while trying to control the weapons quietly.[145] The only province where no effort was ever made in fort building was Henan, because Wu Xiongguang, when serving as its governor, convinced Jiaqing that the residents were too sparse on Henan's southwestern border to carry out the project.[146]

As the emperor became increasingly convinced of the benefits of fortification and steadfastly pressed for its implementation, he could not help but wonder at times if there was time to do it since victory was around the corner.[147] The commanders, however, had their own agendas. As recounted in chapters 4 and 5, Eldemboo had become more passive since late 1800. Instead of trying to round up the last rebels speedily, he merely paid lip service. At the beginning of 1801, Eldemboo talked about forcing all the rebels into one place and eliminating them all at once, while building forts in Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Hubei. He suggested selecting local officials from other provinces to lead the project so that all the battleground provinces could be fortified in several months.[148] In the months to come, Eldemboo continued using fortification as one of the excuses to justify the slow progress in finishing off the last rebels, despite Jiaqing's frustration over the lingering of the campaign.[149] Finally, when Eldemboo proposed the scheme of using fortification projects as relief to settle refugees and discharged militiamen in early 1803, the enraged emperor rained on him a spadeful of harsh censures. In addition to criticizing Eldemboo for using the scheme to buy time for himself, Jiaqing again expressed his doubt about the utility of fortified settlements since the rebels had never attempted to take cities and

towns, whereas residents abandoned their homes and fields to the rebels when they moved into those settlements.[150]

In short, using fortification during the war started as a spur-of-the-moment reaction to the upheaval and was a grassroots movement in the early phase of the war. According to Wu Xiongguang, some people shielded themselves in forts, ironically, to escape being harassed or looted by the Qing armies and militias, who were notorious for their lack of discipline.[151] Recognizing its value in aiding operations, several war leaders advocated fort building. Since 1799, Songyun, Taibu, and Nayancheng had made earnest efforts to spread the practice in Shaanxi, although it did not achieve optimal effect. Contrary to the conventional wisdom that the tactic was not adopted until late in the campaign and that, once it was adopted, the rebellion was subdued, fortification paralleled almost the entire campaign. Jiaqing formally called for adopting the measure by mid-1799. Despite his oscillation, which was germane to his style of leading the campaign, Jiaqing became adamant in pushing it after 1800. Yet the campaign was not brought to its end until several years after, which refutes the measure's magical effect.

The fortification tactic was mainly aimed at denying the rebels supplies but did not aid in any meaningful way in battling the rebels.[152] Only in the last phase of the campaign, starting from 1802, were civilians emboldened to leave their forts and catch the odd insurgent.[153] Nevertheless, fortification did not totally deny the insurgents supplies. To acquire foodstuffs and other necessities, the rebels assailed Qing logistical convoys, broke into the forts, or stormed local markets.[154] More frequently they threatened to attack the forts, especially the smaller ones, to exact supplies. Forts that did not have a water source inside could not withstand siege. In exchange for their safety, civilians usually threw out foodstuffs or sold them to the rebels, especially in Sichuan. Sometimes the rebels even tried to reach a deal with fort occupants not to hurt one another.[155] When fort residents went down the mountains to trade at markets, go about their business, and work in the fields, the insurgents had chances to loot them, or they could kidnap them for ransom from their forts, which even occurred in the last phase of the conflict when the rebels were few in number.[156] Utterly annoyed by the people throwing foodstuffs to the rebels, Jiaqing instructed officials to exhort them not to do so, though he did not intend to punish them for doing it.[157] But exhortation failed to work. At the beginning of 1800, Eldemboo described the situation in Sichuan:

> As for the forts built by the local people in different departments and counties, the big forts can protect the people's lives and their possessions, but the smaller ones cannot hold on [in face of rebel attacks]. Although there are

> some people who take the public interest as a priority, killing and capturing bandits, they are only a small minority.… The method of *jianbi qingye* is good only in theory. Nevertheless, people must pursue their livelihoods and cannot give up trading for a single day. Although they have built forts in the mountains, they need to go down the mountains to work in their fields. When the bandits come suddenly, they are still captured and looted. Lebao and this subject have issued notifications to instruct them [against going down the mountains] numerous times. Yet it cannot be stopped. As for their throwing out food from their forts [to the bandits], this subject has exhorted them in person not to do so every time [I] encounter [them]. But the residents in the smaller forts always use the excuse that they are afraid of their forts being destroyed. Therefore, this bad practice still cannot be eliminated.[158]

By the end of 1800, several rebel bands had tried moving to either Hubei or Shaanxi because it was difficult to get supplies in Sichuan, as some rebels reported. Although this could be taken as evidence of the success of fortification in Sichuan, Wu Xiongguang pointed out, in the late spring of 1800, that the food shortages in northeastern Sichuan were mainly attributable to the interruption of agriculture by years of hostilities.[159] In fact, the rebels also found it difficult to acquire foodstuffs in southern Shaanxi, where fortification was not fully implemented in 1800.[160] Then, in 1801, some insurgents went back to Sichuan, which testifies that fortification did not make it impossible for them to survive in Sichuan. Their movements were mainly dictated by their own strategic goals and Qing military pressure.[161]

Throughout the campaign, only the first part of the tactic, "strengthening the walls," was adopted; seldom was attention paid to the second part, "clearing the countryside." When the civilians moved to the forts, they brought their movable belongings, but they could not wall up their fields. In harvest seasons, the rebels could easily loot the fields and threshing grounds for the crops; rarely did the Qing side do anything to prevent it.[162] At the beginning of 1801, Jiaqing criticized the viceroys of Shaanxi, Gansu, Sichuan, and Hubei for not having made real efforts in "clearing the countryside." He also chided local officials and commanders for always shutting themselves within the city walls and allowing the rebels to loot and burn markets and villages and to coerce people to revive their bands when they were depleted.[163] Even after fortification had been implemented, it was impossible to corral all rural residents into the forts. It was especially difficult to do so in the massive Daba and Qinling Mountains, where the residents were scattered and so easily and often looted by the rebels.[164] Starting in 1800, when most rebel bands had greatly dwindled, it became easier for them to survive, as they did not need supplies in huge quantities. Some lived off the land in the deep forests in the mountains for months. Knowing that vegetation in the wilderness provided the insurgents with natural supplies, every spring

Jiaqing bemoaned the fact that the insurgents had the means to survive again, at least for another year.

No record from the campaign supports the view that fortification started because of Gong Jinghan's 1797 essay. A native of Fujian, whose family had produced magistrates and prefects for several generations, Gong became the magistrate of Pingliang in Gansu in 1784 and briefly acted as the prefect of Xunhua in 1792. During his one-decade tenure there, Gong spearheaded ethnological research on the Salar people in Xunhua and helped compile Xunhua's first gazetteer, *Xunhua tingzhi*, a valuable source on the Salar and their relationship with the Qing. In early 1796, in his capacity as the prefect of Binzhou subprefecture in Shaanxi, Gong won Yimian's notice because of his effective crackdown on the sectarians in Luonan. Gong was thereafter brought onto Yimian's staff and followed Yimian to Sichuan in early 1797. After returning to Shaanxi, Gong stayed in southern Shaanxi until taking up a new post in Lanzhou in 1800. Two years later, he passed away.[165] Gong was an obscure figure during the war. His ideas were not mentioned by anyone in the upper echelons of the war leadership in their memorials throughout the campaign, including by Yimian, Gong's patron, and Songyun, Yimian's successor. The only records about Gong are Yimian's several requests for promotions and awards to him, but none was due to his suggestions on the campaign.[166] Gong Jinghan was likely celebrated as a scholar-official strategist in the postwar era in his counterparts' reflections on the upheaval, but he had little influence during the campaign.

The records also do not confirm Lebao's claim that he was the initiator of this tactic. During his first tenure as Sichuan's governor-general, Lebao mentioned fortification only sparingly in his often long memorials. Given that he was particularly skillful in reaping credit for himself, he would not have neglected it had he indeed initiated this tactic. In early 1799, Lebao stated in the first memorial after he was appointed grand minister commander that he would instruct people everywhere to stow their foodstuffs in "mountain forts" and hide themselves there, among other things he planned to do to speed up the campaign.[167] Here Lebao clearly meant to make use of existing forts; the statement does not read as though he had made efforts to implement fortification in Sichuan. In the summer of 1799, shortly before he was dismissed and arrested, Lebao again reported that he had instructed local officials to urge their people to go up to mountaintops and live together (*juxianzhazhai tuanjuerju*), setting up regulations and selecting heads for the settlements, and that he had supplied them with some weapons.[168] This appears to be all he had done in this regard. Having not heard much on fortification in Sichuan, Jiaqing had to make an inquiry about it in the autumn of

1799 after Lebao was purged.[169] After he was released from jail and sent back to Sichuan, Lebao again did not report much on his effort in fortification, except mentioning in the summer of 1800 that he had merged the people in small forts into bigger ones.[170] Not until after Jiaqing became keen on fort building at the end 1800, mentioning repeatedly that fortification in Sichuan had been so carefully implemented that the rebels left Sichuan for either Hubei or Shaanxi, did Lebao declare in a memorial at the beginning of 1801 that he had begun fortification in Sichuan in 1798 and that he and Delengtai had made more efforts in 1800 by urging the people to do it and by inspecting the forts. Yet he admitted that the "topography" in Sichuan was an advantage, which alluded to the fact that that many forts had already existed when the rebellion started.[171]

Furthermore, none of the edicts issued for the three victories mentions Lebao's contribution of implementing fortification in Sichuan or points to it as key to the suppression of the rebels. This line was not minted until the early summer of 1805, eight months after the final victory was declared and following Jiaqing's audience with Lebao (Delengtai and Eldemboo had had their audiences in 1803 and 1804 respectively). One week after the meeting, on 10/05/25, Jiaqing issued an edict to upgrade Lebao's hereditary title from junior guardian of the heir apparent to grand guardian of the heir apparent because he had been the first to call on the people in Sichuan to practice the "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside" tactic, which had become the reason the three provinces were eventually completely cleared of rebels.[172] Despite his frequent and bitter criticism of Lebao during the campaign, Jiaqing was willing to move on. Not only did he not wish to hold Lebao responsible for all the funds evaporating in Sichuan, but he also allowed Lebao to keep the position of Sichuan's governor-general. Therefore, it was only politic to sugarcoat Lebao's performance in the campaign, which had infuriated the emperor numerous times. Most likely, it was Lebao who reminded the emperor of this "commendable" deed of his during the audience and fed Jiaqing the idea that it was the key to the success of the campaign.[173] Then Lebao wrote an eight-thousand-word memoir, *An Account of the Suppression of the Sectarian Bandits* (Pingding jiaofei jishi). Featuring himself as the inventor of the "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside" tactic, he tried in this piece to set in stone that he had been a major contributor to the success of the White Lotus War.[174]

ABORTED REFORM

Compared with the hundreds of thousands of paid militiamen, the

regular troops deployed in the war were a minority. Bannermen, furthermore, were merely a small portion of those regulars. Given the Qianlong emperor's new doctrine that a war against an internal revolt should not justify the deployment of massive numbers of elite bannermen from Beijing and Manchuria as was required by frontier wars, throughout the war, the Green Standard troops were the main regular forces. Altogether, more than one hundred thousand Green Standard troops were deployed from the five battleground provinces—Hubei, Shaanxi, Sichuan, Henan, and Gansu—and other provinces such as Jiangxi, Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan, Guizhou, Hunan, Shandong, Shanxi, and Zhili.[175] At any given time, there were usually ten to thirty thousand troops in each of the three main theaters. Only 9,500 bannermen (including a couple of thousand Solon soldiers) were deployed over the course of the war in batches from Beijing and Manchuria (Table 6.1), in addition to a couple of thousand troops from the banner garrisons in Xi'an, Chengdu, and Jingzhou.

TABLE 6.1: Deployment of Bannermen from the North

NUMBER OF TROOPS	DEPLOYMENT
2,000	Beijing 1796
1,000	Jilin and Heilongjiang 1796
2,000	Beijing 1797
1,000*	Jilin 1797
1,000	Jilin and Heilongjiang early 1803
9,500	Total

* Two thousand were initially deployed, but one thousand from Heilongjiang were canceled.

In the first three years of the war, Qianlong twice sent five thousand Manchu troops. Despite loud and repeated pleas from the front for banner reinforcements, Qianlong did not send the first batch of 2,000 bannermen from Beijing until the autumn of 1796, when Mingliang's transfer to the Miao campaign left a void in the Hubei theater. Those 2,000 men were from the two elite brigades in Beijing, the Scouting Brigade and the Firearms Brigade. The second deployment occurred in the late summer of 1797, when the Yao-Wang band returned to Hubei, threatening Xiangyang. This time Qianlong sent 3,000 bannermen to Hubei (1,000 from Jilin and 2,000 from Heilongjiang). After Jiaqing took over, he ordered three deployments from the three Manchurian regions. In the late summer in 1799, shortly after Lebao sent back most of the first batch of bannermen from Beijing, Jiaqing deployed 2,000 bannermen from Shengjing, soon followed by another deployment of 2,000 bannermen from Jilin and Heilongjiang (but the thousand bannermen from Heilongjiang were

stayed). In the summer of 1800, Jiaqing ordered the last deployment of 1,500 bannermen from Jilin and Heilongjiang to replace injured and sick bannermen who had previously been deployed.

As Qianlong maintained, the elite Manchu forces were not supposed to be deployed to suppress internal rebellions, and, in the event that they had to be deployed, they should not remain in the war for too long, for their extended deployment would be viewed as evidence of ineffectiveness, which would tarnish the Manchu reputation as an invincible force, impairing the prestige of the dynasty.[176] As Table 6.1 shows, most of the 9,500 bannermen were deployed for only two or three years. In the late autumn of 1801, at the request of Eldemboo, most of the bannermen from Manchuria were repatriated.[177] In the autumn of 1802, right after Gou Wenming was killed, Eldemboo sent back 750 Manchurian bannermen and kept 750 (150 from Shengjing, 300 from Jilin, and 300 from Heilongjiang) and sixty-some banner officers for the wrapping up in Shaanxi.[178] The remaining bannermen continued to be sent back; the last hundreds of Jilin and Heilongjiang bannermen were withdrawn in the summer of 1803, shortly before the declaration of the second victory.[179] Most of the deployed bannermen landed promotions, titles such as *baturu*, and many rewards and gifts. When they returned home, they took with them cartloads of spoils, and some also took war orphans.

Proportional to their size, the bannermen's casualties were light. Whereas about twenty high-ranking Chinese military officials lost their lives, few high-ranking bannermen were killed. One of them was Huilun, Mingšui's adopted son and one of the commanders of the 1797 deployment from Jilin and Heilongjiang. Only days after his arrival at the Hubei front, Huilun was killed in a battle with the Xiangyang rebel force. The other high-ranking bannerman killed was Anlu, Hailanca's son, who was killed at the end of 1799 in northern Sichuan. On both occasions, the emperor expressed his sorrow profusely and sentimentally. As explained by Qianlong, in comparison to the wars on frontiers such as Eastern Turkestan, Jinchuan, Myanmar, Annam, and Nepal, in which enemy armies were led by their own major chieftains, it was highly unworthy to lose precious lives of bannermen, let alone aristocratic bannermen, in battle with ragtag sectarian rebels. Worrying that other countries would harbor contempt toward the Great Qing when they heard that heirs of prominent banner generals could not exterminate the loathsome insurgents but were being killed themselves by the latter, Jiaqing ordered, following Anlu's death, that bannermen no longer be dispersed in Green Standard units but be placed in a separate unit and used only at opportune times.[180] Throughout the rest of the war, Huilun's and Anlu's deaths served as reminders of the validity of

Qianlong's doctrine regarding using the banner forces sparingly outside of a frontier war.[181] When Mukedengbu was killed in a skirmish with a few dozen rebel remnants in northern Sichuan in early 1803, Jiaqing again deemed it too "unworthy."[182]

Behind the façade of haughty rhetoric, two factors figured prominently. First, it became more expensive and burdensome to deploy the banner forces from either Manchuria or Beijing after the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* was promulgated in the early 1780s. In addition to favorable wartime allowances paid to bannermen, the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* stipulated that each of the rank-and-file bannermen was entitled to three horses, and every three bannermen were given one camel, while officers were entitled to more (banner generals were entitled to twenty-four or twenty-five horses and five camels each).[183] To meet this requirement, several provinces had to be mobilized to supply the bannermen with sufficient horses each time they were deployed along with fodder, horse gear, makeshift stables, and horse tenders. As horses were not raised in large numbers in Hubei, Henan, and Sichuan, it was a challenge for the viceroys in the White Lotus War to acquire sufficient horses when bannermen were deployed. In the autumn of 1797, when three thousand bannermen were deployed from Jilin and Heilongjiang, eight thousand horses were also deployed from the state stables for them. But this was the last time the state was able to do so, because there were not many deployable horses left in the stables. In the years to come, each deployment of bannermen presented a huge challenge to provincial officials in the war zone, as they had to scramble for sufficient horses from several different sources, first deploying horses from the local garrisons and then purchasing horses to fill the vacancies.[184] As a last resort, they purchased horses directly from local markets both inside and outside the war zone. Consequently, horse prices were driven steeply higher. In 1800, Kuilun requested that the central government allow the logistical services in Sichuan to buy horses at the rate of 12 taels per head, which was a breach of the rule, as the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* stipulated 8 taels per head. Jiaqing had to give his consent.[185] Yet the bannermen were still often underequipped with horses. In late 1799, Jiaqing instructed Hubei that it was not necessary to provide three horses for one bannerman.[186] As a result, each received only one horse. As Wu Xiongguang reported in 1801, only 40 to 50 percent of the Manchurian bannermen in Hubei had horses. Ultimately, mules were mixed in to equip the bannermen and the Green Standard cavalry in Hubei.[187]

Second, the bannermen were not necessarily superior fighters except for the Solon soldiers.[188] Although early in the campaign some of the banner generals and troops fought hard, such as the regiments

led by Mingliang and Hengšui consisting mainly of bannermen from the Xi'an garrison, those deployed from the north did not live up to their reputation.[189] In the first years of the war, campaign commanders petitioned time and again to have bannermen sent to the front, figuring that the arrival of large numbers of bannermen would be the ultimate relief for them. However, as the war progressed, they became shy of requesting them but were eager to send home deployed Manchu troops. After coming to Sichuan, most of the two thousand bannermen from the Scouting Brigade and the Firearms Brigade were idle in Kaixian's county seat for months. They occupied local residents' houses, tea houses, and wine shops, drinking, singing, and causing an uproar, while claiming wartime allowances and rewards. When they were sent to fight Leng Tianlu in late 1798, they were slow in reaching the front. As Lebao complained, they could not sustain the hardship of marching and fighting in mountainous northern Sichuan. When requesting their repatriation, Lebao stated that he was concerned that they would be looked down on by the Green Standard troops, on top of the waste of funds, if they remained idle in the war zone. In the summer of 1799, those bannermen returned to Beijing on Jiaqing's orders.[190] In 1799, Minghing and his six hundred bannermen from the Chengdu garrison were also stationed in the county seat of Kaixian for months and did not leave the town to engage the rebels when they approached several times. As Minghing confessed, his force was too small to fight.[191] By the beginning of 1800, only about half of the three thousand bannermen deployed from Manchuria in 1797 were active at the front, while the rest had either been left somewhere to heal wounds or illnesses or been sent back home owing to disability, in addition to a few deaths. Sickness and injury were likely merely excuses to avoid fighting or trekking in the mountains on foot, which was notoriously detested by the bannermen.[192] As Nayancheng complained, neither the Green Standard troops nor the bannermen were very useful.[193]

In fact, it was more convenient for the field commanders, who were mostly Manchu or Mongol bannermen, not to have too many bannermen in their forces, for it was more difficult to withhold or cut the pay to the bannermen. On the contrary, Green Standard troops and militiamen were easy prey when it came to misappropriating their stipends and awards, for these two cohorts were in a more disadvantageous position than the elite bannermen. As it had long been widespread practice for Green Standard officers to keep vacancies unfilled so that they could pocket those vacancies' stipends, during the White Lotus War the actual numbers of Green Standard troops deployed from other provinces were often far below the numbers on paper, which was no secret to the throne.[194] Among those

who arrived at the front, desertion was commonplace.[195] Like the bannermen, numerous Green Standard troops stayed in towns or villages to heal their wounds or illnesses, not returning to their units after their recovery, some even selling off their equipment. Consequently, more than half of the Green Standard personnel had become "invalid" by early 1800, according to Eldemboo.[196]

As a result, hired militias became the main combatants in the campaign. The excessive use of civilians in the campaign, however, was challenged from the beginning. In the late spring of 1796, Ohūi expressed his concern that sect members might have disguised themselves and enlisted as militiamen, while actually working for the rebels.[197] Qin Cheng'en alluded to the fact that militiamen in Shaanxi might have killed innocent people to revenge personal scores.[198] More forceful criticism came from Mingliang. Following his brisk victory in Xiaogan in the summer of 1796, in which he used only regulars even though numerous militiamen had been recruited there, Mingliang complained about the militiamen's deplorable lack of discipline, worried that some of them might have personal connections with the rebels, and feared that they would become troublemakers after the campaign ended:

> When local officials hastily recruited [militiamen], believing the more the merrier, they let numerous homeless drifters, elderly, and youngsters fill the ranks. In addition, the sectarian bandits have developed extensive networks by teaching [their religion] from one place to another, which are difficult to detect. Therefore, it is impossible to ensure that there are no people in the militias who are wavering and to distinguish the good from the bad ones, as the latter may disguise themselves.… Even innocent villagers have gotten used to killing months after having taken up spears and bows and abandoned their own professions, and take pleasure in receiving stipends and food rations. Their superiors can award and encourage them but cannot discipline them. [I am] afraid that they may cause more trouble after the campaign ends if they are not resettled properly at the slightest negligence.[199]

Thus, Mingliang asked to disband the militias in Xiaogan. He suggested granting awards to all of them and providing funds for those whose crops and houses had been destroyed to start a livelihood.[200] Although Qianlong seemed to concur with Mingliang on all his warnings, he was not willing to relinquish this expedient: "Mingliang's opinions are right. But now we're relying on the militias to put down the bandits. If we revealed a hint of our doubt of them, they would be suspicious and fearful, which would be serious.… Let's try to deal with [the militias] when we win the campaign completely."[201] Apparently envisaging a speedy victory, Qianlong may have supposed that all the problems associated with the hired militias would be easily resolved once the rebellion was put down.

Mingliang had always prized banner cavalry. In the early years of the campaign, he had mainly used banner soldiers and officers in fighting. When the three thousand Jilin and Heilongjiang bannermen arrived in late 1797, Mingliang and Delengtai took most of them. Although Mingliang used militiamen later himself—perhaps he could not resist the temptation of the financial benefits that came along with having the militiamen in his ranks—he never lost his contempt for those former civilians. Sometimes he had regular soldiers disguise themselves as militiamen to seduce the rebels, thinking that the rebels would willingly engage them because it was easier to fight them.[202] Perhaps posing a contrast to the militiamen's lack of discipline, Mingliang once bragged about the good discipline of his regular troops: they always paid for goods as well as gifts from local residents at fair market prices, and they compensated property owners if they harvested vegetables, corn, and straw from their fields.[203] Presumably, the militias did just the opposite of all of these things.

After Mingliang, more criticism of the militias was voiced by commanders and viceroys across the war zone. Like Mingliang, most complained about the militias' debauchery: they were often implicated in looting, raping, and indiscriminate killing; they were not reliable, either, often deserting at the first sight of the rebels.[204] Fucheng, who had had a few thousand militiamen under him, reported in mid-1799 that his militias pillaged and commandeered goods from civilians when they did not receive supplies on time, for which Fucheng had punished them by cutting off their ears and publicly whipping them. He had even executed a few.[205]

Troubled that untrained civilians in large numbers had been used in battle, sometimes at the front of regular troops, Qianlong sought to strengthen the main regular forces in the war, the Green Standard Army, although he did not seem to have a clear agenda and was prone to be swayed from one idea to another. In the late spring of 1797, on 02/04/06, Qianlong ordered the provincial officials of Zhili, Shandong, Henan, Jiangxi, Hubei, Sichuan, Shaanxi, Gansu, Yunnan, and Guizhou to fill 60 to 70 percent of the vacancies in their Green Standard garrisons because of the deployments to the White Lotus War. As it was unusual to fill vacancies before the return of the deployed troops, Qianlong explained that some of the troops might not return, being promoted to officer positions, killed, or disabled, and, what was more important, that he did not want the garrisons in those provinces left empty for too long.[206] Vague as it was, this decision nevertheless indicated Qianlong's concern over the diminishing size of the regular troops and left the door open for further steps.[207]

It happened that Jing'an made a proposal about this time to

increase the size of the Green Standard Army in Henan. Echoing others' complaints about the militiamen, Jing'an also thought them unreliable for action. Moreover, he reported that militiamen were paid at a higher rate than the regular troops, which was the first time that the throne had been informed of this. Then Jing'an petitioned to be allowed to recruit three thousand able-bodied men (*dingnan*) as combat troops (*zhanbing*). He planned to train them and pay them at the rate of Green Standard infantry soldiers and then assign them to the three commands in Henan, including the command directly under him. Arguing that Henan did not have sufficient garrison troops (only 9,999 Green Standard, officially) and that having more troops locally would be more economical than deploying troops from outside the province, Jing'an apparently intended to make the new troops permanent so that he would no longer need to ask other provinces for reinforcements. Certainly, begging help from neighboring provinces had not been an entirely satisfying experience, given his isolation among the leaders of the campaign.[208]

Qianlong was displeased by Jing'an's proposal, however. First, he thought that it awkward for Jing'an to submit such a proposal right after his own order to fill Green Standard vacancies. But he was more annoyed by Jing'an's hidden agenda of attempting a virtual increase in the Green Standard quota in Henan. If other provinces followed Henan's suit, it would be a radical change (*gengyi jiuzhi*) for the Green Standard Army, Qianlong warned. In Qianlong's view, unlike in Hunan's Miao area, where it was necessary to institute new garrisons to guard newly conquered territories, Henan was a heartland province so that it would be baseless to make such a radical change only because of the trouble caused by "a few" sectarian rebels. Repudiating Jing'an's proposal as "indeed inappropriate," Qianlong ordered a "severe reprimand" of him. Nevertheless, he allowed Jing'an to recruit new soldiers. Not giving up his position that the quota could not be altered, Qianlong planned to use those new recruits to fill vacancies left by promotions and casualties, and to hold the rest until vacancies occurred.[209] In other words, Henan gained royal permission to conduct some advance hires, which would likely lead to an expansion of the size of the Green Standard Army in the province.

Later in 1797, Qianlong shifted his view of militiamen in their favor, as he began to see prospective new soldiers in the militiamen who could fill Green Standard vacancies after the campaign. When Jiang Sheng, the acting governor-general of Huguang, proposed recruiting more soldiers to fill the Green Standard vacancies in Hubei due to the deployments, Qianlong turned the request down and told him to wait until the end of the operations and fill the vacancies with militiamen.[210] Shortly after, when Wang Xin reported his efforts in

regulating and training the militias in Hubei, which was cleared of rebels at the time, Qianlong showed his interest and approval. Wang selected a dozen thousand stout militiamen (*jianyong*) from several counties in northwestern Hubei, issued uniforms and equipment to them, and trained them together with the regulars. Along Hubei's western border, Wang stationed both troops and militiamen and let local gentry members who had some fighting experience lead the latter. In those battleground counties—Zhuxi, Zhushan, Fangxian, Guizhou, Badong, Jianshi, and Lichuan—Wang Xin assigned local officials and military officers to supervise the militias. In endorsing Wang Xin's effort, Qianlong saw the benefits of placing tighter control over the unruly militiamen: it helped prevent them from being swayed by the rebels while preparing them to fill Green Standard vacancies after the campaign.[211]

In the autumn of 1797, eager to see breakthroughs in the Hubei theater, Qianlong instructed his generals not to divide their forces to pursue the rebels separately but to assemble superior forces and eliminate the rebel groups one by one.[212] In response, Mingliang, Delengtai, and Jing'an, in a joint memorial, first pointed out the rebels' shift to guerrilla warfare:

> In the beginning [of their rebellion], the bandits held perilous points and stayed together so that it was possible to concentrate [our forces] to besiege and attack them. But they have recently changed to running around, not holding one place for long, and not staying in one area. They live on looting, so they do not carry supplies when they move and do not set up tents when they camp. They coerce the residents to join them in villages and towns that they pass so that they get more and more followers and can divide [their men] into dispatches to run amok, causing difficulties for the imperial forces in dealing with them. In addition, Xiangyang, Yunyang, Jingmen, and Yichang prefectures in northern Hubei are interlocked jaggedly; numerous roads have many branches and forks. It is difficult to intercept every bandit group.[213]

Then they discussed how to cope with the rebels' high mobility. In line with Qianlong's plan to eliminate the rebels by encircling them instead of chasing them in groups, they suggested setting up a cavalry regiment consisting of four thousand hardy equestrians selected from among bannermen, Green Standard troops, and Salar soldiers. Carrying with them supplies for ten days (Jing'an promised to prepare dried meat and fried rice for them), they could move fast without depending on the cumbersome logistical corps.[214] This proposal of setting up a mobile regiment consisting of troops of different ethnic backgrounds and using guerrilla warfare to counter the rebels' guerrilla warfare pointed in the direction of a new field army. Not quite impressed, however, Qianlong thought it was "too late," although he reluctantly endorsed the proposal.[215] Nevertheless, as the

battleground soon moved to more mountainous southern Shaanxi, which was not ideal for cavalry, this plan never materialized.

Yimian went further in trying to rejuvenate the regular forces. Having first-hand information about the Qing forces and the militias in both the Shaanxi and Sichuan theaters, Yimian was concerned that both Sichuan and Shaanxi had depleted their regular forces, since Sichuan had mobilized more than 19,000 Green Standard troops to the campaign, and Shaanxi and Gansu had deployed more than 20,000 from their garrisons. It was not likely that the central government would send more bannermen to either Sichuan or Shaanxi after the recent deployment of 3,000 Heilongjiang and Jilin bannermen to Hubei. Although he had called for hiring militias and used them himself in both Shaanxi and Sichuan, Yimian had no trust in them as combat forces. In the ninth month of 1797, shortly before he was relieved of the position of commander-in-chief of the campaign, Yimian made an important motion to the throne. First, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the hired militias: "The militias do fight wholeheartedly and concertedly when it comes to guarding their own villages. But many are hesitant to fight when they are deployed to places hundreds of *li* away [from their homes], though there are some who do contribute. These militiamen become arrogant when rewarded and desert when disciplined."[216]

Therefore, Yimian favored expanding the regulars instead of leaning on irregulars. He suggested recruiting 30,000 reserves (*beizhanbing*) in the war zone (10,000 in Sichuan, 10,000 in Shaanxi and Gansu, 5,000 in Hubei, and 5,000 in Henan) in addition to those ordered by Qianlong to fill the vacancies. Yimian planned that the new recruits be trained for two months by either civil officials or Green Standard officers so that they acquired basic combat skills, such as using knives and spears—Yimian was realistic enough not to expect them to master muskets or bows—before they were sent to fill Green Standard vacancies in the war zone provinces and help guard local areas.[217] Qianlong was supportive this time. Nevertheless, thinking that it might not be possible to recruit 30,000 reserves from society, Qianlong ordered that they be enlisted from among the paid militiamen. He hoped that the status of regular soldiers would help discipline them, while the numbers of the militias could also be reduced.[218]

Although Qianlong's modification deviated somewhat from Yimian's original intent, if this motion were to be fully implemented, it would be a considerable upgrade of the out-of-shape Green Standard forces in those provinces. The new blood would boost their size and dilute the semihereditary nature of the Green Standard Army, which might serve as a harbinger to a transformation to professional soldiers.

More important, the reserves could be used as mobile field forces, detailed to ground zero more speedily and less laboriously than banner forces from the north. Nevertheless, it soon became evident that the plan was difficult to carry it out. While the officials in the war zone were half-hearted in converting militiamen into regular soldiers, the main obstacle was that many militiamen were not willing to join the army; rather, they enjoyed better compensation and freedom as paid militiamen.[219] As Jiaqing later stated:

> Ever since the start of the campaign to suppress the sectarian bandits, many edicts have been issued to the provinces from which the troops were deployed, ordering the governors-general and governors to recruit new soldiers to fill vacancies so that the army rosters are full and there are sufficient troops for patrolling local areas. However, civilians often prefer being paid militiamen to being soldiers, for soldiers must observe the army rules and be disciplined, without the freedom to be able to come and go that a militiaman has. In addition, [militias'] "salt and vegetable allowances" and stipends are higher than those of soldiers. Thus, it is easy to recruit paid militiamen but difficult to recruit soldiers.[220]

Meanwhile, the provinces from which Green Standard troops were deployed did not respond enthusiastically to the call to fill the vacancies in advance, given that no funding had been allocated by the central government for this project. In addition, Qianlong's failing health and energy in his last year prohibited him from closely overseeing all the affairs he deemed important. Therefore, neither his order to recruit new soldiers to fill the vacancies nor Yimian's proposal to add thirty thousand reserves was fulfilled. According to a report by the Grand Council in the spring of 1799, only four provinces recruited new soldiers: 1,900 in Guangdong, 7,100 in Yunnan, 10,100 in Guizhou, and 23,400 in Sichuan.[221]

Among the four provinces, Sichuan recruited the largest number of new soldiers. Apparently, Yimian had been the driving force in recruiting them in Sichuan before he returned to Shaanxi early in 1798.[222] In fact, the Grand Council's report might not be complete; other provinces—Hubei and Henan, for example—had also recruited new soldiers. In Henan, Jing'an and Wu Xiongguang recruited 7,400 new soldiers and converted 1,143 militiamen of Kaifeng into regular soldiers for the command directly led by Henan's governor.[223] Nevertheless, despite the discussions and initiatives to boost the regular forces in 1797, the period of 1797–1798 witnessed instead the expansion of militias across the war zone, and hired militias reached hundreds of thousands in both Sichuan and Hubei, as discussed earlier.

When the Jiaqing emperor took over commandership of the suppression campaign, he also weighed the choice between regulars

and irregulars. Knowing clearly all the problems associated with the militia expedient—likely more so than his father—Jiaqing, in the first months of his rule, repeatedly voiced his anger over the excessive use of paid militias, deeming it one of the biggest pitfalls of the campaign, responsible for the towering financial costs. As he put it, "I'm afraid that the militias are also only for show in order to claim funds in an excessive way."[224] Meanwhile, he relentlessly criticized Green Standard officers for stealing their soldiers' stipends and using the soldiers as personal orderlies and workers, hoping to root out misconduct in the Green Standard Army.[225] With his inclination to strengthen the regulars, Jiaqing initially urged the campaign leadership to reduce the militias. Heartened by Jiaqing's position of leaning on the regulars, on 04/02/25, Yimian resubmitted his proposal to recruit thirty thousand reserves in Sichuan, Shaanxi, Gansu, Hubei, and Henan in equal proportions, which was endorsed, again, by Jiaqing.[226]

Given that only 500 new soldiers were recruited in Henan in 1797, merely 10 percent of the approved 5,000, Jiaqing ordered Wu Xiongguang, in the autumn of 1799, to fill Henan's Green Standard vacancies with militiamen. By the beginning of 1800, Henan had recruited 5,000 new soldiers, and Shaanxi had recruited only 1,804. Jiaqing then instructed both Shanxi and Henan to recruit more new soldiers to fill all vacancies and an additional several thousand for deployment to the campaign. More significant, Jiaqing indicated that the new soldiers who were above the Green Standard quotas in these two provinces could be kept after the war. Nevertheless, Jiaqing did not allot any funds for either province. Eager to expand Henan's military forces, Wu Xiongguang instantly recruited 1,000 more soldiers and planned to cut the militias and use the funds saved to pay them, to which Jiaqing agreed. By early 1800, a total of 7,400 new soldiers had been recruited in Henan—more than 3,800 of them were later deployed to Hubei and Shaanxi.[227] Shanxi, however, did not follow up with this project.

During his short-lived war-front reform, Jiaqing entertained some grand ideas about strengthening and reforming the Green Standard Army. Looking back to the dynasty's founding era, Jiaqing, in late 1799, reflected on Lin Qilong's 1659 proposal stressing the quality rather than the quantity of the Green Standard Army. In this well-known memorial, Lin, the vice minister of revenue, dwelt on building a smaller but stronger Green Standard Army and relieving it of the duty of policing local areas, instead concentrating on its combat skills so that it was no longer necessary to call on the Manchu banners whenever there was a need for the deployment of forces. He proposed cutting the Green Standard Army of nearly 600,000 by two-thirds,

leaving only 200,000, while doubling their pay and intensifying their training.[228] In fact, Lin's intent was to make the Green Standard Army a striking mobile army, on a par with the banners. Although Lin's ideas were not implemented, the plan impressed the Shunzhi emperor then and enchanted visionaries for many decades to come. To be sure, Jiaqing was attracted to Lin's proposal not for its suggestion to cut the size of the Green Standard Army. Instead, he was riveted by Lin's plan to build a crack striking field army. Meanwhile, he was startled by the similarity of the problems of the Green Standard Army in his own time to those in the early years of the dynasty, including officers absorbing the stipends of vacated positions and commandeering soldiers as their personal servants.[229]

Although Songyun, along with Taibu, had hired and used militias in Shaanxi and even proposed to increase their compensation to encourage them to perform better,[230] Songyun was in favor of expanding the Green Standard Army as a fundamental solution to the Qing military quandary. Early in 1800, Songyun put forward the drastic proposition that Qianlong's 1781 abolition of the Green Standard officers' "military personnel stipends" be rescinded. Songyun requested reinstating the "military personnel stipend" but eliminating the "silver to nourish virtue" to Green Standard officers. Because the former guaranteed the personnel in officers' service, although most officers appropriated a portion of their stipends, the officers would no longer prey on the soldiers and their stipends. Songyun suggested that the "silver to nourish virtue" to the officers be diverted for the soldiers' stipends. As a result, the Green Standard Army would be expanded in size (with the return of the commandeered soldiers) without increasing the military budget.[231] Nevertheless, this proposal did not win support at the court. Surrounded by a group of generally unadventurous advisors, Jiaqing did not receive much encouraging feedback on any proposals of his own or his officials that would entail radical changes such as this one by Songyun.[232] More important, Jiaqing was already on the brink of retreating from his reform when the war entered its fifth year in 1800.

One of the critical determinants in Jiaqing's retreat was fiscal difficulty. Even though the silver reserves in the treasury of the Ministry of Revenue had largely dwindled at the time of Qianlong's death, Jiaqing had managed to allocate 12.4 million taels of silver to support the campaign in 1799, which further drained the ministry's treasury, since 8.9 million taels were from there. As the war dragged on, Jiaqing began to doubt his reforms as well as the reformers. While seeking ways to cut costs, Jiaqing started shifting his focus from the regulars to irregulars. Consequently, Yimian's thirty thousand reserves proposal was ignored; neither the emperor nor any provincial leader

pursued it after 1800.[233]

FALLING BACK ON THE MILITIAS

Days after the New Year in 1800, Jiaqing dismissed Guwanghing, who had supervised the reform of war finances in Sichuan. Guwanghing had made the greatest effort to reduce the number of militiamen, but his across-the-board approach pitted him against Kuilun, who was more prudent and selective in cutting them. Yet there was no time for Kuilun to rehire the militias that had been largely cut first by Funing and then by Guwanghing before the rebels reached the bank of the Jialing River in Dingyuan, which had been free of hostilities since the summer of 1799. On hearing that the rebels were coming in his direction, Dingyuan's magistrate requested funds to hire more militias, but it was too late.[234]

The rebels' crossing of the Jialing River in early 1800 effected a volte-face in Jiaqing's militias stance, from a muffled endorsement to a steadfast advocacy. Believing that the reduction in the militias guarding the Jialing River had contributed to the rebels' crossing, Jiaqing instantly called on the residents west of the river to organize for self-defense.[235] One week later, he gave his firm approval to a proposal by Changlin and Taibu, which called for centralizing the hitherto decentralized militias in Shaanxi by appointing a leader in every township (*xiang*).[236] Days later, in a long edict, Jiaqing exhorted all the viceroys in the war zone to hire more militias as an alternative to deploying troops from afar. He reasoned that, even though the militiamen were paid more than the Green Standard troops, it was still cost-effective to use them, for the money to deploy one bannerman from the north could hire ten militiamen locally. Once again, Jiaqing warned the viceroys that the militiamen's contributions should be reported and rewarded properly and told them not to be too concerned with resettling them in the postwar era, as the demobilized militiamen could fill vacancies in the Green Standard Army. In the months to come, Jiaqing reiterated those points.[237]

This sharp change in Jiaqing's position regarding the recruitment and use of the paid militias brought about another peak in hiring the militias in 1800 across the war zone. In Sichuan, the total size of the militias quickly swelled to at least one hundred thousand.[238] In Henan, Wu Xiongguang, despite his contempt for the militias, hired more militiamen on Henan's southwestern border in addition to detailing there trained militias (*lianyong*) from Kaifeng, citing the fact that Hubei had been penetrated by several rebel bands.[239] Having disbanded a great portion of its militia force in late 1797, Hubei rushed to hire militiamen in early 1800, especially in Xiangyang and

Yunyang prefectures (1,500 militiamen were hired in each prefecture). Despite Jiaqing's warning not to swell the rolls of paid militiamen too rapidly, by midyear, there were at least ten thousand paid militiamen in northwestern Hubei in addition to the unpaid militiamen.[240]

In the immediate wake of the Jialing River debacle, Jiaqing deployed to Sichuan five thousand Guizhou troops and other reinforcements from Hunan, Guangdong, and Guangxi. But concern over costs soon reclaimed him. Not only did he refrain from sending more reinforcements; he also ordered the sick and wounded repatriated to their home garrisons, keeping only able-bodied soldiers in the campaign.[241] Wen Chenghui, Shaanxi's judicial administrative commissioner, suggested filling the vacancies left by invalids with healthy and strong soldiers selected from their original garrisons. Wen argued that, although this measure amounted to increasing the regular troops in the campaign, it would help speed up the campaign so that it would ultimately be cost-effective. Believing that the war might end in months, Jiaqing was not impressed; he merely sent Wen's memorial to Eldemboo and Nayancheng and let them decide if the new soldiers were necessary.[242]

Soon after, Jiaqing detailed two thousand Green Standard troops from Zhili and Shandong to Henan to reinforce its defense. He told Wu Xiongguang to use money from Henan's provincial coffers to pay for the expenditures, though he would allocate some funds from Beijing if Henan did not have sufficient funds. When the reinforcements arrived, however, Wu complained that those soldiers as well as the ones from Shanxi who had been deployed earlier were all new recruits, unskilled in fighting. Fuming at this, Jiaqing criticized Zhili, Shandong, and Shanxi for sending new soldiers to the campaign and ordered their return.[243] This turned out to be the last time that the throne deployed regulars from outside of the war zone.

As the year 1800 progressed, the Qing state was faced with an increasingly dire fiscal strain. The Jialing River debacle and other emergencies forced the central government to pump more money into the battleground provinces in the first half of the year, which deepened the fiscal plight of the central government. As the rebels were kept at bay in all theaters by late spring, Jiaqing seemed determined to wean the campaign from the state's financial resources and let the provinces take over the burden. He started with Sichuan, where only small numbers of rebel remnants were left when the summer started. Granting Sichuan, on 05/inter04/28, the last 400,000 taels from the treasury of the Ministry of Revenue and the Imperial Household Department's coffers, Jiaqing told Lebao that it was the provincial government's responsibility to finance the campaign thereafter, as recounted in chapter 4.

Although it became nearly impossible for the emperor to stick to his earlier predilection to expand and rely on regulars, it was also difficult for Jiaqing to stick with his endorsement of the paid militias. In the late spring and early summer, Jiaqing drastically altered his position. In the many edicts he issued over two months, he stated that he was not in favor of the paid militias, *xiangyong*. Echoing the complaints he had often heard about them, Jiaqing branded them as mostly homeless and jobless vagrants, unskilled in fighting and hard to discipline. Not only did they not fight wholeheartedly, but they were also unable to guard places since they were not defending their own hometowns. Most important, the cost to hire them was too enormous, given that their compensation was higher than that of the regular soldiers of the Green Standard Army. Moreover, Jiaqing expressed his deep concern over their postwar settlement. Therefore, he warned the war stewardship no longer to recruit them and no longer to deploy them along with the regular troops.[244]

Jiaqing now threw his full support behind the traditional type of militia, unpaid volunteer militias, seeing them as the ideal alternative to paid militiamen.[245] In fact, the Qianlong emperor had also, from time to time, called for resorting to volunteer militias organized by local elites or local officials.[246] Many of the volunteer militiamen were soon incorporated into the paid militias even though there had been calls to convert the paid militias to volunteer ones.[247] The remaining volunteer militias were only a minority compared to the massive paid militias. When the throne and war leaders began to push for fortification in 1799 and 1800, the volunteer militias reemerged; they were recruited from fort residents to guard the forts. Lebao explained, in mid-1800, the differences between the two types of militias:

> *Tuanyong* is different from *xiangyong*. Those who follow the regular armies to fight, guard passes and other strategic points, receive stipends and bonuses, and can be deployed anywhere are *xiangyong*. When local civilians build fortresses with their own money, those who are stout and strong and are selected to guard those fortresses with weapons they prepare themselves and are supplied with foodstuffs donated by residents are *tuanyong*. *Tuanyong* militias care only about their own lives and families and cannot be ordered to leave their forts and fight the bandits valiantly.[248]

In Jiaqing's view, volunteer militias, *tuanyong*, would guard passes and strategic points but should not join the armies and move away from their hometowns. He believed it the task of local officials, from governors-general and governors to magistrates, to organize militias, whereas military leaders should stay away from it, since their obligation was to fight. If the local officials were not effective, they should be replaced, and officials from other places would be sent in.

Figuring that each county could end up with tens of thousands of volunteer militiamen, Jiaqing urged the local officials to set up regulations and to train them regularly. Jiaqing's infatuation with unpaid militias went as far as calling them the "most effective." As he summarized:

> They are the local people to be organized as militias and to guard their own places. When the bandits come, everyone will come out to defend [their hometowns]; when the bandits leave, they will return to their own professions. They do not receive "salt and vegetable allowances" and food rations when there are no operations. Even though the local governments will provide some financial support when it is necessary, the costs are still no comparison to the high rates to hire *xiangyong* militiamen.[249]

It was precisely the low cost that made the volunteer militias so appealing to the emperor, who had been under increasingly weighty financial pressure. In his edicts, Jiaqing indicated clearly that the central government would not pay for volunteer militias, at least for the time being, and that in the event that the militias were funded by the local government, the local government would be reimbursed after the campaign. If they were organized and funded by local residents, he would remit taxes in those places on their request. Aware that, in this manner, the volunteer militiamen would receive much less compensation than paid militiamen, Jiaqing stressed that he would reward them with hat trappings and honorary official positions, grant those who fought hard bona fide official positions, and double the reward to killed militiamen. Expecting that those favors would make up for the financial gap between the paid and volunteer militias, Jiaqing also hoped that they along with the food provided by the local government would help attract marginals, keeping them from joining the rebels.[250]

Contrary to the conventional wisdom on the White Lotus War, which features local elites as the driving force in organizing self-supporting militias, it was the Jiaqing emperor who championed this idea in the middle of the campaign, as he struggled to get out of his fiscal predicament.[251] From this time, to distinguish the volunteer militias from the paid militias, the former were often referred to as either "trained braves" (*lianyong*) or "righteous braves" (*yiyong*) and their leaders as "righteous captains" (*yishou*). The volunteer militiamen guarding civilian forts were called "fort braves" (*zhaiyong*) and their chiefs "fort chiefs" (*zhaishou*). This program was bound to be unpopular in the battleground provinces, for it transferred the burden of supporting the militias to the local government. Strong resistance from both local officials and military leaders would quickly win out against the emperor's proposal to lean on the unpaid militias.

Local officials in the war zone loathed the idea that they would have to oversee the militias but be given no financial support. Gong Jinghan, who had loudly advocated self-defense by local communities in his writings, verbalized his resentment, however, when serving as a prefect in southern Shaanxi:

> As for recruiting militiamen, they are all jobless hooligans and cannot be relied on. The prefectural and county governments are then obliged to discipline them with generous rewards or severe punishments. But this is like obliging a cook to make a meal without giving him any rice, as today's prefectural and county governments are not given any power but only have a façade of authority. Plus, they are under surveillance [of their superiors] as if they were bandits themselves. How can they command obedience if they do not have authority? How can they summon people [for service] if they do not have money?[252]

As Taibu reported, local officials "do not take the order seriously and merely scramble for them [the militias] when they have no choice," and then they "issue food rations to everyone who comes with a spear in his hands," even an old or a frail person.[253]

Also upset by the emperor's push to substitute paid militias with essentially unpaid ones were provincial officials and the commanders. Lebao, Taibu, Wu Xiongguang, Changlin, Lu Youren, Eldemboo, and Nayancheng all complained, loud and clear, about the volunteer militias, deeming them more unreliable than the paid ones, as they were neither disciplined nor motivated, rarely giving a commendable performance. When the rebels came, gongs were struck to summon them, but they did not arrive until the rebels had passed. In battle, they deserted once they met the rebels and suffered some casualties. Worse still, they could not be reassembled once they deserted.[254] In Hubei, the local officials organized more unpaid "righteous braves" than in Shaanxi and Sichuan.[255] But Wu Xiongguang thought that, except for the volunteer militias in Yunxi county, the others were all ragtag and useless.[256] Even those in Yunxi, renowned for their effectiveness, could go wrong sometimes. In the early summer of 1800, they left their outposts and returned home for harvest, which offered the rebels a chance to break into Hubei.[257] In Shaanxi, once civilians built forts, it became difficult to recruit volunteer militiamen to guard checkpoints so that the officials had to offer food rations to give some incentive. To better command those militias, Changlin proposed selecting officials from other provinces and sending them to Shaanxi; he thought it best to have them led by troops, but there were not enough troops.[258]

Among the viceroys, none was more vocal than Lebao. Having defied royal orders in the past, Lebao vehemently resisted reducing

the paid militias. He argued that, although not extremely effective, they were indispensable for tasks such as reconnaissance and guarding critical places including the Jialing River. Lebao also cautioned that it was difficult to demobilize and resettle them; any mishandling might propel them to join the rebels. As an alternative, Lebao proposed placing demobilized militiamen in the ranks of the volunteer militias but extending their pay. As for the funds to pay them, Lebao suggested levying surcharges, so-called subsidies collected from communities (*minjian bangtie*), in western Sichuan, in which peace had been restored by the late spring of 1800.[259] Lebao's attempt to transform the volunteer militias into paid militias was in line with his desire to maintain the scale of the war expenditures. Meanwhile, collecting surcharges in his jurisdiction would make up for the reduction of war funds to Sichuan. Following Lebao, Hubei's provincial officials also asked to issue stipends to their volunteer militiamen and reward them further bonuses for outstanding performance.[260] While reiterating his disinclination to cut the paid militias, Lebao continued hiring militiamen in Sichuan despite his promise not to recruit new ones.[261] Starting in early 1801, Lebao even stopped paying lip service to converting paid militias to volunteer militias, contending that the latter played a marginal role in combating the rebels since they were merely civilians.[262] He insisted on using paid militias for the defense of the Jialing River and again mentioned that he would use the surcharge from western Sichuan to pay them.[263]

Early in 1801, Šulin, the new governor-general of Huguang, arrived at the Hubei front. Like many others, Šulin was not impressed by the irregulars. But, unlike others, Šulin tried to dissuade the emperor from his enchantment with the militias and nudge him to swing his attention back to the regulars. Along with Wesibu, Šulin proposed setting up six garrisons in key locales of northwestern Hubei and stationing two thousand troops in each of them so the Qing forces would not be exhausted by chasing the rebels in the mountains. They would focus on guarding cities and other densely populated areas to force the enemies to unpopulated areas, where they would be denied supplies. The tenor of this proposal was to let the regulars be the main force, while using irregulars to assist them. To get the twelve thousand troops needed for this scheme, they requested fresh troops from the home provinces of the deployed Green Standard forces in Hubei to fill the vacancies left by casualties, which was similar to what Wen Chenghui had proposed for the Shaanxi theater one year earlier.[264] Although Jiaqing concurred with some of their ideas, he turned down their request for fresh troops because he was afraid that the provinces would send only newly recruited soldiers instead of their crack troops. He instructed Šulin and Wesibu to recruit more volunteer militias

instead.[265]

Šulin was persistent, however. As many had already done, he complained that the volunteer militias were ineffective—they "are insufficient to fight the enemy but too much when it comes to disturbing the people"—and expressed concern that there was neither land for them to till nor army vacancies for them to fill when they were demobilized. Moreover, it became difficult to recruit civilians for the militias given the sparse populations on Hubei's northwestern border and its fortification projects. To get enough troops to guard the six key strongholds, Šulin asked Jiangxi to send three thousand reserve soldiers (*beizhanbing*) to Hubei before reporting it to the throne, given that Wu Xiongguang had expressed unwillingness to send more Henan troops to Hubei. Although Jiaqing did not blame Šulin for this move, he doubted that the Jiangxi reserves would be useful.[266] Not long after this exchange, Šulin passed away. His advocacy for relying on regulars became the last call along these lines by a major leader in the campaign.

Having heard enough negative talk about the volunteer militias and being eager to wrap up the campaign, Jiaqing did not always insist on using volunteer militias. In an edict to Changlin and Lu Youren early in 1801 about reinforcing the defense of Shaanxi, Jiaqing directed them to replace invalid troops with fresh ones and to hire new militias to replace weak ones—a position inconsistent with his response to Šulin's proposal. He even told them not to be concerned with the cost, as it would save more money if victory could be quickly achieved.[267] At times, Jiaqing envisaged that another surge in the militias might expedite the mopping up of the campaign.

In the summer of 1801, when Wesingge and Qiu Xingjian reported the findings from their inspection trip to Shaanxi, they estimated that there were more than 80,000 regular troops and about 20,000 paid militiamen in the war, which gave a total of 100,000 forces, whereas only 20,000 rebels were at large. The two commissioners were wholly critical of the paid militiamen, calling them ragtag, unskilled in fighting, and useless in defending, and blaming their lack of discipline for some defeats. They claimed that, except for the expeditionary militiamen led by Eldemboo and Delengtai, all the others were worthless. Moreover, they pointed out that the use of militias gave rise to chances for the logistical staff to embezzle funds. To close the loopholes, they suggested that all militiamen be registered and no new militiamen be hired without endorsement.[268] Nevertheless, no longer interested in rooting out war-front corruption, Jiaqing only instructed Eldemboo to have local officials better administer the militias, saying that he was well aware of the problems related to the paid militias, but it was difficult to register all of them.[269] As a result of Jiaqing's

laissez-faire position, more militiamen were hired throughout the war zone in the last phase of the campaign—they were sometimes referred to as "new braves" (*xinyong*). By mid-1802, there might have been 60,000 to 70,000 paid militias in the three provinces, with their number reduced to 45,000 to 50,000 by the early autumn.[270] To be sure, volunteer militiamen, who may have numbered many times more, could be converted to paid militias once they were paid. Apparently, many were.

THE DÉNOUEMENT FOR MERCENARIES

As detailed in chapter 5, the Qing's failure in administering paid militias was an important factor in the protraction of the concluding phase of the White Lotus War, allowing the wartime expedient to become a huge liability. Despite his acute awareness of the peril of the paid militias ever since taking the reins of government, the Jiaqing emperor had no effective means to complete the intricate and difficult task of getting rid of them in a timely and uneventful way. The militias took full advantage of the opportunity to demand maximum settlement benefits, while resisting enlistment as soldiers, given the lower compensation and the more disciplined life as a regular. The war leaders, for their part, were not willing to lose them all at once, as the large numbers of militiamen served as a bargaining position for funds and a major excuse for excessive expenditures.

Despite his oscillation about this wartime expedient, Jiaqing could no longer hide his anger and disgust at the militias in the late summer of 1802, when only hundreds of rebel remnants were still at large and the long-anticipated triumph was on the horizon. He straightforwardly criticized the excessive use of paid militias:

> It has been held [as a principle] that the military and civilian sectors are separated. Taking agriculture as their livelihood, civilians have not been allowed to practice military skills, even the possession of weapons being banned, so that they do not have a chance to turn violent. Now that there are so many hired militias (*xiangyong*) in the three provinces, it will ultimately prove to be a bad thing, since it is easy to recruit them but difficult to disperse them, though they give us some help right now. As for the volunteer militias (*tuanlian*) of the local communities who guard their own fortresses, they will not turn into bandits since they all have livelihood and property. But hired militias are jobless drifters. When they are recruited, their pay is even better than that of the soldiers. And they follow the armies for a long while, being used in fighting and killing the bandits. Therefore, it is hard to turn them away from their violent and bellicose propensity.[271]

Jiaqing then obliged his commanders to find workable solutions to properly and expeditiously dismiss and settle them. At the same time,

he admonished his military to hone their own capabilities so that it would not become necessary to hire militias in the future.[272] From this point on, he never swung back to favoring the militias.

In early 1804, months before the conclusion of the long campaign, some court officials suggested amending the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* to add rules for compensating paid militiamen so that abuses could be avoided in the future. Perhaps aware of Jiaqing's position, the Grand Council and the ministries of War, Revenue, and Works turned down the proposal. They suggested instead that paid militias not be used in the future. In addition to giving his approval to this decision, the emperor issued an emotionally charged edict to chastise the use of paid militiamen in wars, making clear his intention to discontinue the practice:

> The reason for a country to have an army is to protect the people. The elite Eight Banners that are stationed in the core areas and the Green Standard Army that is stationed in the provinces are meant to be deployed whenever there are military needs. Our dynasty has clear rules for the military institutions. All the past wars on our frontiers, such as the ones to pacify the Zunghars, the Muslim tribes, and the Jinchuan area, and the wars to suppress internal rebellions, such as the ones against Wang Lun and Su Sishisan, were fought by military personnel and won by them. There has never been a single case in which militias were hired. When the Taiwan bandit Lin Shuangwen made trouble, some local residents in Taiwan, which is far away from the mainland and separated by the ocean, volunteered to be used in fighting the rebels, as they were inspired by public interest and moral principles. Thus, they were allowed to follow the army and aid in the campaign. Nevertheless, in the war against the heretical bandits [the White Lotus rebels], the field commanders and local officials recruited numerous militiamen and made them march together with the regular armies. In the end, there were more and more militiamen, amounting to tens of thousands in number. It is reasonable for local residents, out of a sense of duty, to get together to form militias themselves to defend their homes when unrest occurs in their neighborhoods. However, how does it make sense for the authorities to recruit civilians and use them in battle and to deploy them to other provinces for years? I have never heard of this.… How can the military be unable to serve the country but to depend on civilians who have never been trained to fight on the battlefield? Then what is the point of having standing armies?[273]

Jiaqing subsequently exhorted his military officials to pay close attention to the training of his army. For him, the abnormal practice of using massive numbers of militiamen in this war had come about because Green Standard soldiers neglected their training, instead being hired by their supervisors as valets or learning crafts to make money so that they could not fulfill their duties once there was a war.[274] Throughout the White Lotus War, the Qing state was ambivalent and vacillated in its policy toward paid militias, though it was not unaware of their downside and danger. In the statement

above, however, Jiaqing firmly and explicitly repudiated the unrestricted use of hired civilians to fight in wars, leaving little room to revive the scheme in the future. For that reason, the compilers of the official chronicle of the suppression campaign stressed that the use of paid militias in the war was merely an "expedient," downplaying its weight and impact:

> Our country has strict and plain regulations for our military system; it selects and trains crack armies. When there is a need for deploying armies, it should not be necessary to hire and use militias (*xiangyong*) and the like. This time, when the sectarian bandits made trouble in northern Hubei, local gentry members took the initiative to organize themselves and guard their own homes and communities, for [the rebels] rose all at once in many places, and there were not sufficient troops to be deployed to all the places. Then their magistrates hired them to take advantage of their manpower. But it was only an expedient.[275]

Not only it is not accurate to state that only later on did local officials take over the militias (in fact officials took the initiative in many places from the start of the campaign), but the statement also does not mention that tens of thousands of militiamen had fought on the battlefield for years. Clearly, this was not a glorious chapter in Qing military history.

Nevertheless, denouncing the mercenaries officially could not obliterate the fact that perhaps more than ten thousand former militiamen were still enlisted in garrisons in Shaanxi and Sichuan, especially in new commands set up during and after the campaign. Viewing them as a hazard for the dynasty, Jiaqing frequently expressed his concern. One year after Delengtai reported that the last rebels had been eliminated, marking the conclusion of the conflict, a couple of hundred former militiamen in Shaanxi's Ningshan command rioted in the late summer of 1806. Several months after, at the beginning of 1807, two other mutinies occurred in Sichuan's Suiding (formerly Dazhou) and Shaanxi's Washiping.[276] (Map 6.1.)



MAP 6.1. The Three Mutinies. Their locations and the sites of major battles.

When the Ningshan command was set up in 1800, it was meant to add a military presence at Wulang, a critical point in the Qinling Mountains. As planned, it would have six thousand new soldiers, 60 percent Green Standard soldiers transferred from other units and 40 percent militiamen who had no homes to return to.[277] For years, however, the command was understaffed. On top of the difficulty of converting militiamen to new soldiers, given their low interest in joining the army, the leaders in Shaanxi, chiefly Eldemboo, were not proactive in filling its roster but had concentrated on negotiating with the throne to raise the pay to its troops.[278] Not until the summer of 1804, when Eldemboo hastily discharged all the militias in Shaanxi,

did the command have its roster filled—most of the six thousand soldiers were discharged militiamen.[279] As those militiamen were designated as "guardsmen soldiers" (*shoubing*) and many had to start as intern soldiers, their stipends were much lower than their militia income. Moreover, they were treated disrespectfully by their new superiors.

At midnight on 11/07/05, led by Chen Dashun and Chen Xianlun, two to three hundred new soldiers mutinied, as they were about to lose a 0.4 taels monthly subsidy, the "rice allowance" (*mizheyin*) issued to new soldiers for the first three years. They looted and burned government buildings in the town of Ningshan. At dawn, in a skirmish outside the town, the mutineers killed Yang Zhizhen, acting Ningshan commander, and another officer. Then they proceeded west, coercing civilians and inviting militiamen-cum-soldiers in other garrisons and outposts to join them, gathering a crowd of three to four thousand. However, they did not seem to have a plan. After they captured the county seat of Yangxian early in the eighth month, they turned back in the direction of Ningshan and then moved north, but they were kept from approaching Xi'an and forced to enter the Qinling Mountains. To fight against them, about twenty thousand Qing forces were mobilized from Shaanxi, Sichuan, Gansu, Hubei, and Henan, and a hundred-some bannermen were sent from Manchuria. On 11/09/24, Delengtai, Zhaketaer, Yang Yuchun, Yang Fang, Xue Dalie, Fengshen, and Wenchun, half of the deck of commanders of the White Lotus campaign, encountered the rebels at Jiangkou's Fangchaiguan, near the plank trail. Nevertheless, many new soldiers from other garrisons in Shaanxi and Sichuan were reluctant to fight against the mutineers, given their similar experience, and some of them even ran away. At this point, two rebel chiefs, Pu Dafang and Wang Wenlong, led their men and surrendered to Delengtai, and they then captured Chen Dashun and Chen Xianlun. Meanwhile, another group of mutineers who did not surrender was subdued. The mutiny came to its end two and a half months after it started.[280]

At the beginning of 1807, unrelated to the Ningshan mutiny but perhaps inspired by it, dozens of the new soldiers of the Suiding command, which had taken eighty-some militiamen when the White Lotus campaign ended, rioted before dawn on 11/12/22 in the city of Suiding, as they were bitter about their insufficient income. Led by Wang Dexian, Kong Chuanshi, and Liu Jinding, the first two being former militiamen, the mutineers burned the yamen, opened the jail, looted the treasury, and tried to kill their commander, Wang Guoxiong, who was said to be ultrastringent in treating his subordinates. The mutiny was quickly put down by the Sichuan forces led by Gui Han; all two-hundred-some mutineers were either killed or

arrested within a week.[281]

Shortly after, on 12/01/12, thirty-some new soldiers, all former militiamen, in the Washiping outpost, which was under the Xixiang brigade, staged another mutiny, believing that their commander had misappropriated the soldiers' stipends. Led by Zhou Shigui, the mutineers fled to the Daba Mountains after having seized silver in the outpost's coffers and looted and raped civilians. In two battles in ten days, the Qing forces crushed the group, killing or catching all five-hundred-some people in the band.[282]

Those mutinies were only the second time in Qing history that soldiers protested in a violent manner on behalf of their interests—the first mutiny had occurred at the end of the seventeenth century, when the Kangxi emperor downsized the Green Standard Army in the wake of the Wu Sangui rebellion.[283] Although none of them escalated into a major conflict, the three mutinies in 1806–1807 sent warnings to the state, further enforcing its distrust of and disgust toward the former militiamen. In the wake of the mutinies, Jiaqing issued an edict to placate the militiamen-cum-soldiers who did not participate in the mutinies, assuring them that they would not be discriminated against as long as they remained loyal to the dynasty.[284] However, Jiaqing could hardly conceal his feelings toward the former militiamen when he learned that Delengtai had sent more than two hundred surrendered mutineers back to the Ningshan command. In a spate of harshly worded edicts, he criticized Delengtai for the arrangement and demanded a solution. Pressed by the emperor, the Shaanxi authorities decided to send them and three hundred other new soldiers to the garrisons in Xinjiang, to which Jiaqing added that the two-hundred-some mutineers would never be allowed to return from Xinjiang, not even after their tenure ended.[285] However, long before they had served up their term, early in 1809, Songyun, the Ili general then, suspected that some of those former mutineers were plotting a riot. In addition to executing those who had shown defiance, Songyun ordered the rest of the group killed as well. The deaths of 195 former militiamen in Xinjiang brought a tragic end to the chapter of hiring civilians to fight at the turn of the nineteenth century. Publicly, Jiaqing condemned Songyun for being unnecessarily cruel in killing those who were apparently innocent.[286] In secret, he may have been greatly relieved. After all, those former militiamen were the "dregs," as he once wrote.[287]

CHAPTER 7

COST

> They know that they will be awarded a maximum of only one of the five noble ranks with fixed stipends, when they successfully conclude the campaign. That is no comparison to enjoying handsome bribes, in the thousands or tens of thousands of taels, when they lead their troops and pass through local areas. So they are enticed to keep the bandits alive in order to enrich themselves and waste state funds to line their own pockets.
>
> —THE JIAQING EMPEROR, 1799

FINANCIALLY, the White Lotus War was an unprecedented disaster for the Qing dynasty. The state claimed that its cost was as high as 120 million taels of silver, twice the cost of the second Jinchuan war, which was the most expensive war during the long Qianlong period. By 1799, three years into the war, the central government's treasury had been nearly depleted of its abundant reserves, which would never be restored. The chief reason for the White Lotus War's enormous cost was war-front corruption, in which military commanders and local officials boldly and adeptly siphoned off the war funds that were copiously supplied by the central government. What unfolded in the war zone nullified the effort made by the Qing state in the late eighteenth century to curb wartime expenses and corruption as well as permanently impaired the Qing state's fiscal vitality. War-front corruption was also a key factor in the protraction of the campaign to suppress a weak rebellion, as the opportunities to misappropriate war funds propelled both commanders and local officials to keep the campaign unfinished and the rebel remnants alive. Although the Qianlong and Jiaqing emperors were both keenly aware of the danger of a fiscal breakdown, neither was successful in reining in war expenditures. Jiaqing's war-front reform lasted only a few months and was aborted by early 1800. During the remainder of the war, misspending and misappropriations of war funds continued at the

front, while the state scrambled for funds to support the campaign and keep up with routine state expenditures. Official records from the war period and subsequent audits of the war's expenditures reveal the mechanism and dynamics of the war's finances and the techniques and patterns of the prevalent corruption. Although the Qing state escaped a breakdown of its financial system, the dynasty's fiscal abundance and flexibility was irretrievably lost.

FUNDS

Given the nature of war—a violent way to exercise political power whose trajectory is often dictated by contingencies at the frontline—it is difficult to budget a war's expenses accurately. In both modern and premodern times, it has not been uncommon for states to be drained of their financial resources by unexpectedly long and expensive wars. Yet the case of the White Lotus War is extraordinary for the stark contrast between the low gravity of the military challenge posed by the rebels and the colossal financial cost. Never before in Qing history had any single war, public project, or other undertaking gulped down such a gigantic amount of money, 120 million taels, as claimed by the Qing state. This sum was two and a half times the dynasty's annual income during the long Qianlong period (50 million taels) and about eleven times the average annual spending of the Ministry of Revenue in the same period (11 million taels).[1] Unfortunately for Qing historians, however, no complete account detailing the allocation of funds has been left in the extant Qing records.[2] To reconstruct the allocations and distributions of the war funds, one can only piece together information scattered in the compiled records and archives. Table 7.1 compiles the results of such an endeavor by this author.

Noticeably, the figures throughout the years do not add up to 120 million. Nor do they match several milestone figures that were clearly stated by the emperor: over 30 million taels had been disbursed to the war zone by the fourth month of 1797,[3] 70 million taels by the beginning of 1799,[4] and 100 million taels by 1800.[5] Nevertheless, the amounts of war funds received by some provinces as shown in the table are corroborated by provincial officials in their memorials, demonstrating that the information in Table 7.1 is near accurate.[6] Several factors may have contributed to the discrepancy between the alleged grand total, 120 million, and the total amount tabulated, 91.7 million. First, so-called assistance funds (*xiexiang* or *xiejiyin*), the allocations that were routinely sent to Sichuan and some other battleground provinces from taxes collected in wealthier provinces, might have been counted toward the 120 million. Given that the state revenue in silver submitted to the central government was unusually

low in 1796, it is likely that, in addition to the tax remissions, more revenues were retained in provinces and then allocated to both the Miao campaign and the White Lotus campaign.[7] Second, expenditures that occurred in the provinces outside the war zone in supplying the troops passing through and sending supplies to the campaign may have been included in the grand total. Although those provinces did not receive war funds from the central government, they usually requested reimbursements, which normally took the form of deductions in the taxes they were obliged to send to Beijing.[8] Third, the central government had, throughout the campaign, remitted and reduced taxes for the areas devastated by the conflict, repeatedly for some of them. It is not clear whether the figure of 120 million taels took the revenue losses into consideration, counting them as expenses of the war. Last, the emperor may have been either misinformed or misguided. Judging from the emperor's conflicting statements about the cost of the war at various times and the fact that his figures were often approximate, based on his impressions in lieu of accurate tabulations, the emperor's inaccuracy is the most probable reason the 120 million tael figure does not match the figures in the records.

TABLE 7.1: Fund Allocation to Battleground Provinces in 1796–1804 (in Taels)

	HUBEI	SHAANXI	SICHUAN	HENAN	GANSU	TOTAL
1796	4,500,000	0	0	2,000,000	0	6,500,000
1797	8,000,000	4,000,000	10,000,000	1,000,000	400,000	23,400,000
1798	2,000,000	6,000,000	7,000,000	800,000	600,000	16,400,000
1799	1,000,000	2,900,000	7,000,000	500,000	1,000,000	12,400,000
1800	1,820,000	7,406,000	3,150,000	100,000	2,100,000	14,576,000
1801	700,000	3,683,000	900,000	0	0	5,283,000
1802	1,650,000	3,400,000	3,300,000	0	0	8,350,000
1803	600,000	500,000	1,250,000	0	0	2,350,000
1804	200,000	1,200,000	1,000,000	0	0	2,400,000
Total	20,470,000	29,089,000	33,600,000	4,400,000	4,100,000	91,659,000

Source: Derived from the appendix: "Allocations of War Funds, 1796–1804."

Although 120 million taels is probably an inflated estimate, the total amount of money allocated to the war zone, more than 91

million taels, as shown in Table 7.1, is by no means modest. After the campaign, the editors of the campaign's official chronicle had to defend the expenditure by arguing that the difficult terrain in the war zone and the guerrilla tactics of the rebels prohibited the smooth transportation of war matériel so that the throne had to send large amounts of funds in advance. Yet they could not help but marvel at the unprecedented extravagance in funding this campaign: "Never before had a military campaign been so lavishly and promptly funded."[9]

Keenly aware of the peril of unbridled wartime expenditures in the late Qianlong era, the Qing state had tried to rein them in. This effort was totally negated in the White Lotus War. In previous wars, the central government allocated more funds at the request of the field commanders and was vigilant in not allowing the commanders to mislead it. However, little prudence was exercised in funding this campaign, especially in the first three years when Qianlong was in charge. Reckoning that the rebels would be wiped out quickly so long as he threw all his support behind his generals, he often granted funds before receiving the requests from the commanders and always in large amounts, typically 2 to 4 million taels. Taking advantage of Qianlong's generosity in funding the campaign, the leaders at the front demanded millions of taels each time, sometimes only shortly after the arrival of previously requested funds.[10]

Ironically, the more the central government gave, the more the battleground provinces were prone to shortages of funds. Sichuan was the most notorious in this regard. At the end of 1797, upon Yimian's request, Qianlong granted another 4 million taels to Sichuan, bringing the total allocated to Sichuan in 1797 alone to 10 million taels, about equal to the average of the annual expenses of the central government during the Qianlong period.[11] No sooner did the 4 million arrive in Sichuan in the spring of 1798 than Ingšan and Funing requested another 4 million taels because they had nearly used up the newly arrived funds. Qianlong had no choice but to endorse another 4 million.[12] Nevertheless, the new allocation of 4 million taels did not last much longer than the previous one. Merely two months after the 4 million taels arrived in the summer of 1798, Funing requested another 4 million taels, as only about 1 million was left, which could only last for two months, or so Funing claimed. This time Qianlong hesitated, choosing not to endorse this request but exhorting the leaders in Sichuan to wrap up the campaign speedily. However, when Lebao, Ingšan, and Funing cosigned another request shortly afterward and reiterated the urgency of their needs, including postwar reconstruction, and Funing sent another memorial at the same time detailing the difficulties in supplying the armies, Qianlong gave in,

approving 3 million, while chastising them again for not having concluded the operations and warning them that he would not be so generous next time.[13] In the last months of his life, removing one million from the multiple million taels requests was the most Qianlong could do to try to save some money.[14]

Did Sichuan truly need such huge amounts of funds in battling merely a few dozen thousand insurgents? At the beginning of 1800, before the Jialing River debacle, Guwanghing estimated that 100,000 to 200,000 taels of silver would have sufficed to support all the troops in Sichuan for a month. Even with the most expensive costs included —transporting supplies and the pay to the militias—Guwanghing estimated that Sichuan would have needed only 3 million taels per year.[15] During his short tenure as the logistics executive in Dazhou, Guwanghing had managed to slash expenses significantly, albeit to many people's dismay.[16] Although the number of militiamen was down in 1800 from that in the first three years, the drastic discrepancies in the war expenditures under the different heads testify to the massive misappropriations in Sichuan from 1797 to 1799, during which time at least 24 million taels evaporated there.

In the initial stage of the campaign, Qianlong was careless, at times reckless, when it came to spending. He frequently granted one-month stipends, at times two-month stipends, to all the troops who had participated in a battle, if it was reported a victory, as discussed in chapter 1. The rewards were as high as 100 taels per person for the bannermen and hundreds of taels for the officers. Although the one-month-stipend reward had been used in the past—in the second Jinchuan campaign, for example—it had never been so liberally granted. The openhanded rewards worked to discourage the military from bringing a speedy end to the campaign, for the longer the war lasted, the more opportunities there would be for rewards. Since the troops were frequently deployed across provincial borders, it was not unlikely that those one-month-stipend rewards were claimed more than once, on site and from the war coffers of the troops' own province.[17] However, starting in the late spring of 1797, it became increasingly rare for the throne to give one-month stipends across the board. Likely, the fast draining of the funds in the state's exchequer and the criticism by censor Song Shu of commanders' taking advantage of the war for promotions and rewards bore some effect.[18] The one-month-stipend reward was then reserved for the occasions when a rebel chief was either captured or killed and for those who had been injured in battle.[19]

The heedless spending in the first three years resulted in the sharpest decline in the silver reserves in the state's treasury in Qing history. A universal tax remission to celebrate Qianlong's retirement

aggravated the fiscal burden. As planned, the remission was implemented in the first three years of the Jiaqing reign, from 1796 to1798. Therefore, while the central government coped with unprecedented war expenditures, its income fell by at least one-third owing to the tax remission. In 1796 and 1797, most of the war funds were allocated from the "inner coffers" (Neiku), one of the two storehouses of the Ministry of Revenue. The reserves in the inner coffers usually served as emergency funds and were rarely disbursed for routine expenses; the salaries of officials in the central government and the stipends to all the banner forces in the capital were usually disbursed from the other storehouse, the "outer coffers" (Waiku) or "ministry's coffers" (Buku), which was the ministry's main storehouse.[20] In two years, from the fourth month of 1796 to the end of 1798, 27.8 million taels were disbursed from the inner coffers to the campaign. Starting from 1799, only funds from the ministry's coffers were allocated. Apparently, the inner coffers had run low or even out of reserves.[21]

By the end of 1796, the nearly 70 million taels of silver that had been accumulated in the ministry's exchequer in the Qianlong era had shrunk to 56.6 million taels. In 1797, at least 21.4 million taels were allocated from Beijing to the campaign. Meanwhile, funds were still being allocated to the Miao campaign, which was in its concluding phase. Combined with routine expenses, more than 35 million taels were disbursed in 1797, the highest amount in Qing history. Never before or after did the central government's annual spending ever reach the threshold of 30 million, and only a few times were more than 20 million taels spent annually. Consequently, the silver reserves in the exchequer were down to 27.9 million in 1797. By the end of 1798, only some 19.2 million taels were left, which was the lowest point since the late seventeenth century.[22] Most important, the loss of the huge reserves in the exchequer proved to be permanent. For the rest of the Jiaqing period, the silver reserves never reached far above 30 million taels. In the following Daoguang period, from 1821 to 1850, they fluctuated between 10 and 33 million.[23] Thus ended the dynasty's fiscal golden age. The ailing Qianlong witnessed it in his last days. (Figure 7.1.)

In his first edicts following his father's death, Jiaqing stated that he was greatly disturbed by the fact that 70 million taels of silver had been spent in this campaign.[24] However, he did not explain how he came up with the figure of 70 million taels. As shown in Table 7.2 below, in the first three years, at least 43.2 million taels had been sent from the Ministry of Revenue treasury to the campaign. Meanwhile, the exchequer also paid for the central government's routine expenditures (which averaged annually 11 million taels during the

Qianlong period and thus 33 million in three years) and the Miao campaign. Perhaps Jiaqing had mistaken the total amount of silver disbursed from the treasury of the Ministry of Revenue in those three years, 78.9 million taels, for the total of the funds sent to the White Lotus War. To be sure, the fact that the treasury had disbursed 78.9 million taels in merely three years was itself alarming,[25] as it was nearly two and a half times the average expenses during the Qianlong period. Jiaqing was right to be upset.[26]

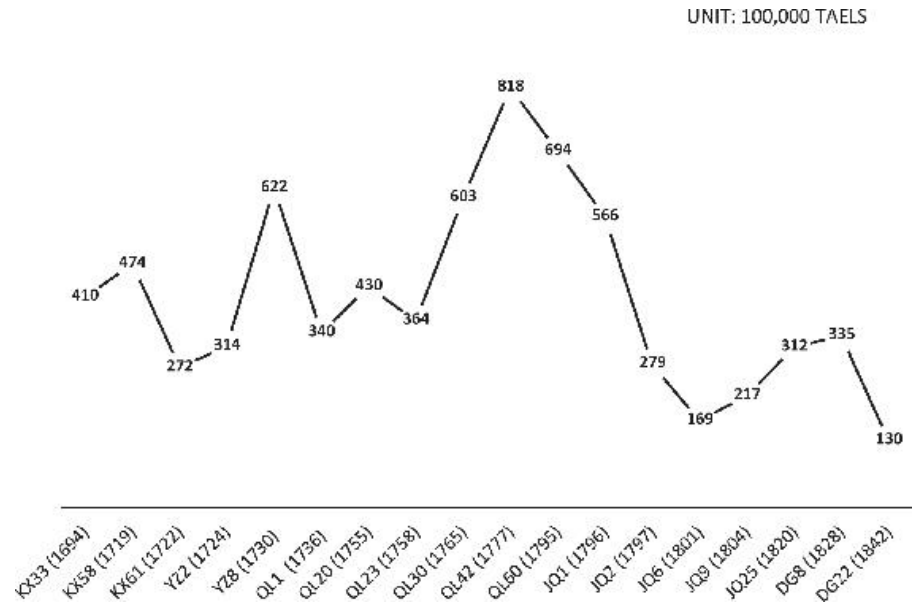


FIGURE 7.1. Silver Storage by the Central Government, Kangxi through Daoguang Periods.

Source: Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu yinku shouzhi he kucun tongji*, 104–5.

TABLE 7.2: Sources of Funds Allocated to the War Zone (in Taels)

YEAR	MINISTRY OF REVENUE TREASURY	IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD DEPARTMENT TREASURY	PROVINCES	CUSTOMS DUTIES	MERCHANT DONATIONS	HANDLING SALES INCOME	SALT TAX	UNCLEAR	YEAR'S TOTAL
1796	6,000,000	0	500,000	0	0	0	0	n.a.	6,500,000
1797	21,400,000	0	2,000,000	0	0	0	0	n.a.	23,400,000
1798	16,800,000	0	600,000	0	0	0	0	n.a.	16,400,000
1799	8,900,000	400,000	500,000	1,000,000	1,600,000	0	0	n.a.	12,400,000
1800	6,000,000	1,300,000	5,126,000	550,000	1,200,000	100,000	0	n.a.	14,578,000
1801	400,000	200,000	1,800,000	0	1,033,000	150,000	1,600,000	n.a.	5,383,000
1802	200,000	0	4,071,540	1,350,000	1,340,000	948,460	1,050,000	340,000	8,300,000
1803	0	0	0	0	1,950,000	0	0	400,000	2,350,000
1804	0	0	100,000	1,500,000	400,000	200,000	200,000	n.a.	2,400,000
Total	58,700,000	1,900,000	13,697,540	4,300,000	7,683,000	1,988,160	2,850,000	740,000	31,659,000

Source: Derived from the appendix "Allocations of War Funds, 1796–1804."

However, Jiaqing never openly criticized his father for the reckless spending in the first three years. He did not fault Hešen for it, either—none of Hešen's many "crimes" had anything to do with allocating excessive funds to the campaign. But he was determined to cut costs. While reshuffling the war leadership, which ushered in the short-lived war-front reform, Jiaqing did away with the one-month-stipend reward that his father had profusely used. Instead, he started granting silver plaques (*yinpai*) weighing 1 and 0.5 tael apiece to the troops when there was a need to reward them. At first, he sent five hundred plaques in each weight to the front, limiting the number of recipients to one thousand. Later he sent two hundred or even one hundred in each weight. Finally, he mixed in some silver nuggets (*yinluo*), which weighed less than 0.5 tael each. As a result, he reduced the costs of rewards from thousands or even tens of thousands of taels to 750 taels, then 300 taels, then 150 taels or less.

As was typical of him, Jiaqing swung constantly between cost cutting and lavish spending in exchange for early victory. More often than not, right after he expressed his resolve to cut expenditures, he added that he did not mind the high financial cost if that helped conclude the campaign expeditiously. He even stated that he was willing to breach logistical rules and pay more than allowed by the statutes if necessary for the campaign.[27] Although he was concerned about criticism for huge expenditures and violations of logistical statutes, he reckoned that a speedy final victory would be enough to silence it.[28] It was this mindset that prompted him to change his attitude toward paid militias at the beginning of 1800.[29] On the day he learned of the rebels' Jialing River crossing, he told Eldemboo not to "concern himself with high financial cost. If the bandits can be eliminated one day earlier, the money that can be saved will be great.

If it [the rebellion] lingers on for more days, it will end up wasting more money."[30] This point was reiterated again and again throughout the rest of the war.[31] Consequently, the total spending for the White Lotus War in 1800, 14.6 million taels, is 2.18 million more than that in 1799, 12.4 million.

Given Jiaqing's lack of determination, it should not be a surprise that he was unable to steer the war finances away from the path set under his father's auspices. Like Qianlong, Jiaqing was inundated by incessant requests for large amounts of funds. Sometimes, the governors-general and governors of the battleground provinces went to extra lengths to heighten the pressure on him. When they told him that they had borrowed money from local merchants, Jiaqing, loath to extort the public, approved their requests and urged them to repay the money to the merchants as soon as the funds arrived.[32] The viceroys also pushed their cases by claiming that they had borrowed from their provincial treasuries or from neighboring provinces.[33] Another convenient pretext was to alarm the throne with reports on the rebels' attacks on places in which peace had been restored. When Xu Tiande penetrated Hubei in 1799, Wesibu exaggerated the danger and requested 1 million taels for border defense, which was readily approved.[34] In early 1800, Hubei requested 800,000 taels, again by citing invasion by several thousand rebels. Despite his chagrin, Jiaqing endorsed 400,000 taels.[35]

Initially, Jiaqing lodged great hopes in the new leaders he sent to the war, such as Songyun and Kuilun, hoping that they could put a brake on the excessive war-front spending.[36] Nevertheless, the new leaders did not have a magic wand to alter the war-front culture instantaneously. They, too, made frequent requests for funds.[37] As the central government tightened the purse strings, the three battlefield provinces competed for funds. In Shaanxi, Songyun repeatedly retained a portion of the funds allocated to Sichuan when they passed through Shaanxi.[38] After Taibu took over war logistics from Songyun, he followed Songyun's lead in intercepting the funds for Sichuan, as the war coffers in Shaanxi were empty, but his requests for funds were not always approved.[39] By the end of the spring of 1800, Shaanxi had retained a total of 1.75 million taels designated for Sichuan. Not surprisingly, Sichuan was outraged. Guwanghing complained loudly that Sichuan would have had sufficient funds had Shaanxi not intercepted them.[40] The new leaders' scrambling for funds exhausted Jiaqing's patience and trust. Jiaqing criticized Songyun and Taibu more than once for retaining Sichuan's money, accusing them of "using your neighbor's field as a drain" (*yilinweihe*).[41] Only half a year after Songyun's dismissal, Taibu was also sent away. In 1801 and 1802, however, their successors continued to intercept the funds for

Sichuan or Gansu, including ordinary "assistance funds." As a result, Jiaqing periodically had to allocate funds to Shaanxi. In 1799 and 1800, Jiaqing allocated about 27 million taels in total to the campaign. From 1801 to 1804, he gave another 18.4 million taels. Compared with the 46.3million taels allocated in the first three years while Qianlong was at the helm, the yearly cost was down. Nevertheless, as the scale of the operations was considerably and increasingly smaller after Jiaqing's takeover, the expenditure of more than 45.4 million taels was hardly justified.

Unlike the Qianlong emperor who had seldom blinked when granting multiple million taels in one allocation, Jiaqing had no luxury to do this, given the dire fiscal situation he was faced with. After 1799, Jiaqing rarely allocated more than one million taels at a time. Starting in 1800, he had to tap into more than one source for a single allocation. Under Qianlong's auspices, the majority of war funds allocated in the first three years were from the treasury of the Ministry of Revenue. Jiaqing did the same at first. In 1799, he allocated 8.9million taels from the Ministry of Revenue's treasury to the campaign. However, in 1800, only 6 million taels were disbursed from that treasury, a considerable decline from the previous year, while 8.6 million taels came from other sources. In the summer of 1801, Beijing and its suburbs were inundated by days of heavy rain with the Yongding River breaking its banks. Disaster relief and repairs of the riverbanks further deepened the state's financial predicament. The reserves in the ministry's treasury declined further to only 16.9 million (see Figure 7.1). In 1801, only 0.4 million taels were allocated from the ministry's treasury in its final disbursement of funds to the war.[42] From 1799 to 1801, Jiaqing also allocated money from the Imperial Household Department's treasury, the Storage Office (Guangchusi), but the total amount was only 1.9 million taels. After 1801, all funds allocated to the campaign were from sources outside the capital.[43] Gone were the scenes of large conveys carrying millions of taels of silver trekking from Beijing to central China, whereas traffic between other provinces and the battleground provinces multiplied, as Jiaqing turned to the provinces and the private sector to support the ongoing White Lotus War. (Table 7.2.)

The money from outside of the capital came from diverse sources. Starting in 1800, Jiaqing had used gabelle and internal customs duties to pay for the campaign. From 1801 to 1804, 2.65 million taels of gabelle were transported from the salt commissioners' offices to the war zone. Also sent there were 4.3 million taels of customs duties from several customhouses in the country. Whereas both the gabelle and the customs duties, a total of 6.95 million taels, were parts of the revenues of the central government, a much larger amount of the

funds came from tapping into the provincial coffers. More than 10.6 million taels, about 23 percent of the funds allocated between 1799 and 1804, were from the provinces. Throughout the war, at least 13.7 million taels were drawn from this source, and more than 77 percent was under Jiaqing's auspices. During the Qing dynasty, a large portion of provincial revenues, of which land taxes were the mainstay, was not sent to the capital but retained in provinces to pay for administrative expenses and to support the armies stationed in the provinces.[44] Some of the more affluent provinces also had the obligation of sending "assistance funds" to provinces whose revenues were insufficient to pay for their own expenses. In the event of war or major projects, it was not uncommon for the central government to go after the provinces for contributions. In this war, several provinces had to dig out from their provincial emergency funds (*fengzhuyin*) to fulfill the emperor's orders to support the campaign, although other funds were also used, including the revenues of the central government stored in the provinces.

Except for expenses incurred when provinces hosted troops or sent supplies to the war, the provinces could not always deduct the amount of funds they sent to the war from revenues that were due to the central government in the subsequent years. It was up to the provinces to figure out ways to make up the fiscal gaps. Some provinces would try to fend off Beijing's demands. Early in 1800, Shandong and Henan told the central government that they had run out of funds and could no longer fulfill their obligation of sending "assistance funds" to Shaanxi and Gansu.[45] In the middle of the year, Jiangsu, Anhui, and Zhejiang also reported that their treasuries were exhausted.[46] Although Henan had played an instrumental role in the dynasty's fiscal balance in the eighteenth century, given its large revenue from the land tax but a smaller garrison army to feed,[47] it was hit early by the rebellion and then involved in supplying the troops and convoys passing through the province. With Henan unable or unwilling to contribute more, Jiaqing used Shanxi to fill in.

Thanks to its sizable revenue and thriving commerce, including the lucrative border trade with the Mongols and the Russians, while having a smaller garrison force as well, Shanxi became the natural choice for both the central government and the battleground provinces when it came to resources.[48] In the summer of 1798, Qianlong ordered Shanxi and Henan to send 300,000 taels each to Gansu out of their newly collected tax income for war funds, which Qianlong was not prepared to reimburse.[49] After Jiaqing took over, the battleground provinces frequently turned to Shanxi for contributions, which always won royal approval. Meanwhile, Jiaqing made requests to the province himself time and again.[50] Among all the funds drawn

from the provinces outside of the war zone—13.7 million taels—more than 50 percent (7 million taels) came from Shanxi. In addition to silver, Shanxi also sent grain to the war.[51] Jiaqing used Shanxi as a storehouse for funds he allocated to the campaign when he did not feel comfortable sending the funds directly to the logistical chiefs in the war zone.[52] But this function was taken over by Henan starting in early 1802, when Henan had been out of the conflict for several years.[53] In the spring of 1802, Shanxi might have reached the limits of its fiscal capacity. When Jiaqing ordered Shanxi to send 200,000 taels to Shaanxi and then another 1 million taels to Sichuan shortly after, Shanxi faltered; Governor Bolin informed Shaanxi that he had to delay sending the funds until he had collected enough tax revenue.[54] This turned out to be the last time such demands were made of Shanxi. After 1802, with the war expenditures decreasing, the provinces were no longer targeted for funds, though they continued sending grain and other supplies to the campaign. Henan again bore the brunt of the requisitions of supplies in kind.[55]

Of the monies raised from the private sector, two sources figured prominently in the latter part of the campaign: income from selling *jiansheng* titles and donations by merchants, which totaled about 9.7 million taels, or more than 20 percent of all the funds allocated to the war since 1799. A nearly routine way to generate funds, title selling had been staged even in peacetime in Qing. In addition to the central government, Jiaqing allowed the provinces to sell the titles to replenish their depleted coffers. On 04/12/15, Jiaqing approved the program drafted by the Ministry of Revenue for selling *jiansheng* titles in the provinces.[56] The outcome was impressive. In Guangdong, by the eighth month of 1800, 391,600 taels had been raised. When Guangdong requested that the campaign be extended for another year, Jiaqing happily endorsed the request.[57] Shortly after, Shandong also obtained a one-year extension by citing the enthusiastic response in the province—341,000 taels had been raised, largely exceeding the target, of 250,000 taels.[58] In four years between 1800 and 1804, a total of nearly 2 million taels from this income had been sent to the White Lotus War.[59]

As is well known, the Qing state actively tapped the wealth of merchants in the form of what were called “donations from merchants” (*shangjuan*; also *baoxiao*, literally meaning “contributions”) when the state was in urgent need of cash, as in wars or for sizable public or royal projects. On those occasions, merchants were nudged to make donations, although some of them knew when to make such offers without being told.[60] In the spring of 1799, a group of salt merchants in Zhili province donated 660,000 taels. and some merchants of Shandong donated 340,000 taels. Apparently, the

two groups had been coordinated to come up with a total of 1 million taels. Jiaqing accepted 60 percent from each group—396,000 from the Zhili merchants and 204,000 from the Shandong merchants.[61] After this, more and more merchants offered "donations."[62] Knowing that Shanxi was abundant in wealthy merchants, Jiaqing wrote Bolin several times early in 1800, telling him to "persuade" some rich merchants to make contributions. However, to get 2 million taels he promised to the emperor, Bolin launched a campaign to exact the populace in general by setting quotas for all the counties. Some merchants who failed to yield enough money were locked up and beaten. On hearing of the complaints from the merchants, Jiaqing upbraided Bolin, ordering him to call back his agents. Yet the extorting of residents by the officials in Shanxi did not completely stop.[63] From 1799 to 1804, a total of 7.7 million taels "donated" by merchants was allocated to the campaign, but the total of their contributions may have been greater.[64]

In addition to silver, other matériel was also sought from outside the war zone. This included grain, weaponry (both cold weapons, such as bows and spears, and firearms, including muskets and cannons), ammunition (including raw materials for gun powder such as lead and saltpeter), and draft animals such as horses, mules, and camels. The staple in the largest quantity was grain, mainly rice, which was sent from Henan, Hunan, Jiangxi, Jiangsu, Anhui, Gansu, Guangdong, and Guangxi. At the beginning of the campaign, grain stored in the "ever-normal granaries" (*changpingcang*)—the mandatory official granaries set up all over the country—in and near the battlegrounds was used. However, those granaries were soon emptied because some of them had not maintained their required reserves, or some of their reserves had been sent to the Miao campaign. Although Sichuan had been exporting surplus rice in large quantities to other areas in the eighteenth century, the weight of overpopulation had eroded this advantage by the end of the century.[65] After the White Lotus War started, the granary reserves in and near the conflict-ridden areas in Sichuan were exhausted first. Provincewide, only 23 percent of the total reserves were left by the summer of 1798, mainly in the province's northwestern and southwestern peripheries.[66] Since then, Sichuan had had to ask for grain shipments from other provinces to support the campaign, although efforts were made to replenish the granaries when the harvest was good, as in 1798 and 1799.[67] Not until the last phase of the war did Sichuan become a supplier again, sending rice to Shaanxi.[68]

At the beginning of the conflict, Shaanxi had been a giver rather than a receiver of matériel. When Yimian went to Sichuan in early 1797, he sent rice, wheat, and beans, as well as ammunition from

Shaanxi to Sichuan.[69] This soon changed. From later in 1797, southern Shaanxi had been turned into a major battleground after the Xiangyang insurgents arrived on their way to Sichuan. With more and more Qing forces heading to Shaanxi—one hundred thousand troops and militiamen by early 1800—the demand for foodstuffs surged. By the spring of 1800, the reserves in Shaanxi's granaries had been used up.[70] Food shortages became increasingly acute, driving food prices extremely high.[71] In 1800, Shaanxi procured rice several times, in the hundreds of thousands of *shi* each time, from other provinces.[72] For the remainder of the war, Shaanxi continued to depend on grain from outside, even though the numbers of troops and militiamen progressively decreased.[73] Although Hubei was better off—only its northwestern corner was constantly affected by the hostilities—it also needed grain from outside. On occasion, Hubei retained a portion of the tribute grain shipment transported to Beijing via the Han River and intercepted rice sent from other provinces to Shaanxi.[74]

Over the course of the war, it is likely that no less than one million *shi* of rice, wheat, and beans were sent to the war zone, whereas 3.5 million *shi* of rice was used from the granaries in the three main battleground provinces.[75] Usually, transportation costs outweighed the cost of grain, especially for goods sent into the Qinling Mountains. To contain the transportation expenses, Jiaqing enjoined the troops, in an edict in late 1800, to accept both wheat and rice, and to carry some of their food rations instead of relying solely on the logistical corps.[76] During the campaign's concluding phase, Shaanxi acquired rice from northern Sichuan instead of Henan to save transportation costs.[77] It is a complex issue, however, when it comes to who paid for the grain and the transportation. When the throne ordered grain sent from other provinces to the campaign, the provinces might have deducted the costs from the revenues due to the central government in the following years. However, when the viceroys in the battleground provinces made the requests to other provinces, they usually paid the transportation with war funds. Sometimes, they also paid the cost for those provinces to replenish their granaries, but it is not clear that it was always so. To find out the total cost of this undertaking, the Ministry of Revenue proposed in the autumn of 1802 to conduct an audit of the grain consumed in this campaign. As it was bound to be an extremely difficult process, Jiaqing extended the deadline of two months suggested by the ministry to four months.[78] Nevertheless, this order does not seem to have been implemented or completed. At the very least, several million taels must have been spent acquiring (including the cost to replenish the granaries) and transporting grain to the war zone. Part of the cost might have been covered by the war funds allocated to the battleground provinces. The rest, which remains

an unknown figure, could have been in addition to the 91.7 million taels allocated to the war.

LOGISTICS

During the Qing dynasty, the civil bureaucracy was routinely engaged in supporting the military forces in war. Provincial officials were often appointed as commanders-in-chief of a war or chief executives of logistical services. In the White Lotus campaign, all the successive viceroys of the battleground provinces were charged with leading either military operations or logistics. Together with the commanders of the armies, they formed the de facto war-front authorities, reporting to the throne jointly on the campaign's progress and war finances. Meanwhile, civil officials from the provincial to the county levels were also mobilized to support the logistical undertaking. For one, prefects, magistrates, including expectant ones, and clerks, were recruited to staff ad hoc logistical bureaus (Junxuju). Having taken shape during the war against the Zunghar Mongols during the Yongzheng period, the logistical bureaus were responsible for receiving and issuing war funds, hiring civilians to serve as porters and guides, and taking charge of building or repairing roads and bridges to facilitate the movements of the armies or destroying them to obstruct the enemy. There was no set format for the composition of the logistical bureaus. Sometimes, they consisted of no more than one boss and several assistants, although they were usually under the close supervision of either a governor-general or a governor.[79] When the conflict involved two provinces, the logistical staff from the two provinces cooperated with each other. In addition, all other local government personnel in the war zone were obliged to aid the campaign in their jurisdictions by transporting supplies, maintaining communication lines, hosting injured and sick troops, dealing with logistical convoys and commissioners passing through their areas, organizing militias, building forts, securing cities, towns and passes, and relieving and settling displaced civilians and former insurgents. Onerous as they were, the burdens also represented opportunities.

Hit first by a wave of uprisings in early 1796, Hubei spearheaded the logistical networks. Under Bi Yuan's auspices, four logistical bureaus were set up in Jingzhou, Yunyang, Xiangyang, and Wuchang. Whereas the first three bureaus were near hot spots, the one in Wuchang, the provincial capital, was meant to procure and transport to the frontlines ammunition, supplies, and funds. Since he had been in Dangyang to direct the siege there, Bi appointed his protégés to head the logistical bureaus. At first, Shuangqing, an expectant intendant-prefect, served as the executive of the logistical services in

Hubei. However, Bi soon replaced Shuangqing with Hu Qilun, the prefect of Xiangyang. Under Hu, the Xiangyang bureau became the nerve center for logistics in the Hubei theater, although the bureau was only staffed by two people, Hu and one assistant, and the bureau's office and storehouse were in Hu's own home.[80] Because the conflict in Hubei had been on and off, some logistical bureaus were closed and then reopened.[81] In the last phase of the campaign, Yichang, Fangxian, and Xiangyang served as the logistical centers, while the bureau in Wuchang continued to function.[82]

With the spread of the rebellion to more provinces, logistical services were set up in Henan, Shaanxi, Sichuan, and Gansu (Table 7.3). In Henan, Jing'an appointed Wanyan Dai, the Nanyang prefect, to oversee logistics early in 1796.[83] As Henan was largely out of the hostilities after the Xiangyang insurgents left for Shaanxi in early 1797, the logistical operations in the province were limited, chiefly serving the armies passing through the province. Like Henan, Gansu was involved in the conflict only when its southeastern corner was invaded by the insurgents between 1798 and 1802. Only one logistical bureau was set up in Lanzhou, the provincial capital. In Shaanxi, Qin Cheng'en led the logistical undertakings for the first three years. When Songyun took over in mid-1799, the logistical bureau in Hanzhong served as Shaanxi's logistical headquarters, with two other logistical bureaus in Xing'an prefecture and Xi'an. In Sichuan, there were three logistical bureaus in Dazhou, Baoning, and Chengdu.[84] Of the three, the Dazhou bureau was most important, dealing with most of the enormous amount of war funds sent to Sichuan, and thus referred to as the "general logistical bureau" (Junxu zongju). Far away from the frontline, the Chengdu bureau was mainly responsible for procuring grain, uniforms, ammunition, horses, and so on, but not usually involved in distributing the funds to the armies and paying the militias and laborers.[85]

TABLE 7.3: Logistical Leaders in the Battleground Provinces

HUBEI	SHAANXI	SICHUAN	HENAN	GANSU
Bi Yuan and Wang Xin 1796–1798	Qin Cheng'en 1796–1799	Ingšan 1796–1798	Jing'an 1796–1798	Yang Kui, 1797–1799
Jing'an 1798–1799	Songyun 1799–1800	Funing 1798–1799	Wesibu 1798–1799	Guwangheo, 1799–1801
Wesibu 1799–1800	Taibu 1800–1801	Kuilun and Guwanghing 1799–early 1800	Wu Xiongguang 1799–1801	Wang Wenyong 1801–1804
Wu Xiongguang 1801–1805	Lu Youren 1801–1802	Tojin and Guwanghing spring of 1800	Yan Jian 1801–1802	
	Zu Zhiwang 1802–1803	Lebao 1800–1805	Ma Huiyu 1802–1805	
	Fang Weidian 1803–1805			

Source: Information gathered from relevant records in *XFFL*, GZDJQ, *QSLJQ*, NGDK, and elsewhere.

Between the logistical bureaus and the battlegrounds, relay grain stations (*liangtai*), led by either a prefect or a magistrate, dotted the routes through which matériel was transported.[86] In Sichuan, under the Dazhou bureau, two major transportation stations (*zongyuntai*) were set up at Yingshan and Zhongzhou, each overseeing a string of relay stations.[87] In the summer of 1797, when the Xiangyang rebels entered Sichuan and the battleground expanded to Kaixian, new grain stations were set up in Xinning and Dongxiang. Since there were not sufficient able-bodied men to be hired locally, laborers brought in by the Qing forces were used to staff those stations. Yimian appointed Chen Lansen, a tax intendant of Jiangxi province who had been brought to Sichuan by Delengtai from the Miao campaign, and Xianfu, Shaanxi's judicial commissioner who was taken to Sichuan by Huiling, to oversee those new stations.[88] The use of local officials—and more often than not expectant officials—from outside, particularly from Beijing, to man the logistical bureaus and grain stations was commonplace in all the theaters throughout the campaign. By 1799, numerous outside people were employed in the logistical networks in the war zone.[89] They continued to arrive until the last stage of the

campaign, but by then they were also assigned to supervise the building of forts.

Although the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* stipulated that the distance between two stations be 100 *li*, the rule was not always followed. Citing the mountainous terrain and the danger of being attacked by rebels who were nearby, Sichuan often set up grain stations every 60 to 70 *li* or even 40 to 50 *li*. In the early stages of the campaign, most of the stations hired hundreds to a thousand porters, but a few big stations had several thousand porters, such as the one at Wenchongxi, a major station near Dazhou.[90] In Shaanxi and Hubei, the Han River, in addition to land routes, was also used for transportation when the water level was high enough for it to be navigable.[91] When the transportation routes were blocked by the insurgents, the logistical staff sometimes distributed silver ingots to militiamen or laborers to deliver to the armies via bypasses.[92] However, Jiaqing raised his eyebrows at such a risky method—the silver could be easily lost. He preferred a method in which the logistical services stored grain and other supplies in advance near the places frequented by the rebels. When the local residents built more forts on mountaintops, the forts were also used to store the supplies.[93]

As in previous wars, this campaign necessitated a massive military labor force to transport supplies and ammunition for the armies and carry away casualties from the battlefield. Because the military labor force had been the costliest and most prone to abuse of all the expenditures in the wars of the Qianlong era, the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* meticulously regulated the compensation of laborers, leaving little room for manipulation.[94] In the White Lotus War, however, those rules were soon compromised. In Hubei, the laborers were overpaid, although the details are not clear. In Sichuan, laborers were paid at first according to the benchmarks set in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*. They all received a "family settlement allowance" (*anjiayin*), a one-time payment for settling their families, and travel money upon their hire and food rations and wages during their hire (they received only food rations but no wages when having no assignment or returning from a sortie). One shed was built for every thirty laborers. For those laborers who marched with the armies, one tent was provided for every ten people.[95] However, the size of the labor force increased quickly and greatly. As explained by Qin Cheng'en, who was in northern Sichuan to coordinate logistics in early 1797, because the trails in the Daba Mountains were narrow and steep, it was impossible to use draft animals. As porters could only carry two *dou* of rice each, half of which they consumed themselves, twenty thousand porters were needed to support twenty thousand troops.[96] By the early summer of 1797, when massive Qing forces converged in northeastern

Sichuan, nearly one hundred thousand laborers were allegedly hired.[97]

A new problem in the White Lotus War was the constant shortage of men in the military labor force. Not only were the conditions dangerous and sometimes life-threatening,[98] but able-bodied males preferred joining the militias, given the better compensation.[99] To lure people to the military labor force, the logistical authorities had to raise the pay and add sweeteners.[100] Soon after the start of the campaign, the armies employed so-called long-term laborers (*changfu*), who were attached to the armies for an extended period. A breach of the statutes, using long-term laborers proved to be one of the most expensive and problematic expenditures in this campaign, as examined below.

As the campaign progressed, the role played by the logistical bureaus decreased significantly, and the commanders relied more on "logistical commissioners embedded in armies" (*suiying liangyuan*) to handle their logistical needs. Initially, those commissioners, most being lower-ranking civil officials, were sent to the armies by the logistical bureaus as liaisons. However, the commanders soon preferred officials with higher ranks to serve in this function, for they had to deal with magistrates and the local communities as the armies moved around. Late in 1799, Kuilun sent Li Hong, a prefect, to Eldemboo to replace the latter's logistical commissioner, Cui Tefeng, who was merely a departmental magistrate. After Eldemboo went to Shaanxi in early 1800, Zhu Xun, Shan'an circuit intendant, became his logistical commissioner and stayed in the position until the end of the campaign.[101] In the case of Delengtai, who was especially demanding and even abusive in his logistical needs, it was most critical to send the right person to work for him. After he returned to Sichuan from Shaanxi in the spring of 1800, Delengtai, along with Lebao, requested the reinstatement of Shi Zuorui, who had been dismissed and placed under corruption investigation by Kuilun. After Shi was exonerated and reinstated, Delengtai named Shi as his logistical commissioner to replace Wu Wensen, an assistant subprefect, for Wu lacked sufficient authority because of his lower rank.[102] When Delengtai went to Hubei in the spring of 1802, Wu Xiongguang sent Chen Lansen, who had served Delengtai before and was then a circuit intendant in Hubei, to be Delengtai's logistical commissioner while the latter was in Hubei.[103]

With logistical commissioners shouldering most of the work, the provincial viceroys were inclined to do away with the logistical bureaus. After he returned to Sichuan in 1800, Lebao reconstructed the logistical services. Ignoring Jiaqing's instruction to name a new director for the Dazhou bureau after Tojin and Guwanghing returned to Beijing, Lebao instead abolished both the Baoning and Dazhou bureaus at the end of the summer and appointed Chen Yu, circuit

intendant of Yongning who had worked at the Dazhou bureau, to take charge of the logistical affairs in eastern Sichuan and Li Hong to do the same in northern Sichuan. As a result, only the bureau in Chengdu received and disbursed war funds. As Lebao argued, the change saved the expense of running the two bureaus in Dazhou and Baoning, and to have only one bureau made things simpler when it came to audits of war expenses.[104] Without a doubt, this arrangement put Sichuan's provincial government in a better position to take advantage of the war funds (Lebao was stationed in Chengdu in the last part of the campaign). In the Hubei theater, when Wu Xiongguang became governor-general in 1801, he made the Xiangyang bureau a branch of the Wuchang bureau, sent Zhang Daoyuan, a circuit intendant, to lead the Xiangyang bureau, and ordered all the magistrates and logistical commissioners in Hubei to report to Zhang.[105] In the Shaanxi theater, the logistical services were more centralized. Stationed in Hanzhong, the headquarters of the logistical services in Shaanxi, the successive viceroys took tight control of the war funds and logistics. Suffice it to say that by 1801 the logistical bureaus had been sidelined; the viceroys had assumed closer and more direct supervision of the logistical affairs in their jurisdictions.

LOOPHOLES, ABUSES, AND MISAPPROPRIATION

Outsourcing the logistics in wartime to the civil bureaucracy and local society testifies to the Qing state's capability in mobilizing a wide spectrum of society to support its military operations. However, the ad hoc logistical system was bound to be costly, since the state had to pay for the services provided by civilians. Not only did expenditures easily become out of control, but the system also gave rise to numerous loopholes, resulting in a fertile ground for corruption, as was exposed in the wars of the Qianlong period. In the White Lotus War, not only did old practices that had been proscribed by the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* reappear; new abuses emerged and became rampant. Although Qianlong reproached war-front officials now and then for squandering war funds and expressed his concern over the dynasty's financial health,[106] it was after his death that the Jiaqing emperor lashed out against war-front corruption relentlessly and repeatedly. Jiaqing criticized the commanders for spending war funds on banqueting and entertainment with "singing boys and dancing girls" (*getong wunii*) and blamed Fuk'anggan for setting a poor example. He said: "All the commanders have heeded Fuk'anggan's and Helin's practice, eating, drinking, singing, and having fun in the military camps [at the front]. I know very well that they use state funds to pay for their entertainment."[107] He also knew well that

officials in the capital craved to be sent to the war zone and that, when they came back, those who had had modest property holdings became nouveaux riches, many hurrying to their hometowns and purchasing real estate with the money they brought back from the front.[108] The evidence shows that his remarks were not exaggerations.

Nevertheless, the reality was more complicated. The opportunities for abuse and embezzlement were manifold, some being overt, while others were subtle and covert. Both the military and the civil bureaucracies were involved in preying on the funds so generously allocated for the campaign. Whereas outsiders such as officials and censors in the central government invariably held that war funds were stolen in large quantities, the insiders, including those who had been critics themselves before they were sent to the front, at times defended the breaches and abuses as necessary. Thanks to Jiaqing's short-lived war-front reform, some memorials in 1799 and 1800, especially those by Kuilun and Guwanghing, two outspoken reformers, exposed in detail the loopholes and vices in both war finances and the Qing fiscal system in general. Also useful for depicting a mosaic of war-front corruption are the records of the long-drawn-out audit of the campaign's expenditures. What follows may not be a complete picture, but it contains the major ingredients of the misspending and misappropriations in the campaign.

Embezzling War Funds through "Deficiency Silver"

During the brief ferment in the wake of Hešen's purge, censor Gu Jiqi poignantly deplored war-front corruption in a memorial: "In the past years, tens of millions taels of war funds have been allocated. At the front, women, silks, jades, and other treasures are abundant among the armies, whereas provisions for soldiers are often in shortage. When the ill-gotten monies are sent home, it is a spectacle to see the roads full of carriages, to the extent that there is a satiric saying: 'It is better to simply write money orders (*huipiao*) [to the commanders] than grant funds [in silver ingots].' "[109]

Censor Gu was right: if a good portion of the funds and the goods ended up being sent back to the homes of the generals and officials, many of whom were based in Beijing, how did it make sense to take so much trouble to transport millions of taels of silver ingots to the war zone? The long distance aside—it took three months for the funds from Beijing to reach Sichuan—it was especially difficult for convoys to pass through the narrow and tortuous mountain plank trail between Meixian and Hanzhong. As each wooden container enclosing 3,000 taels was mounted on a pair of mules using two poles and it was impossible for two mules to walk in step in some sections of the trail, porters had to be hired to carry the containers in those sections, and

then the containers were reloaded onto mules. Onerous as it was, the fact that the war funds were delivered in silver ingots instead of money orders provided war-front officials with their first gateway to embezzle the funds.

It is well known that different scales used to weigh silver often led to discrepancies in the silver's weight. These discrepancies had become a major source of gray income for the officials in Qing times. When collecting taxes, magistrates levied the notorious "meltage fees" (*huohao*) in the name of making up deficiencies.[110] However, when silver ingots were issued by the central government to the provinces and the funds were transferred between provinces, the dynamics of taking advantage of discrepancies in silver's weight was different. By claiming that the funds were somewhat underweight when the funds were at their full weight or not quite so underweight as claimed, officials at the receiving end could either pocket a portion of the silver or place it in their contingency fund for projects that could not be covered by their official budgets. Alleged deficiencies in the weight of silver were referred to as "deficiency silver" (*duanpingyin*). When the actual weight of the silver was more than what was allocated, the surplus, so-called surplus silver (c*hangpingyin*), could either be embezzled or be stored as a contingency fund, referred to as "surplus after weighing" (*pingyu*), to supplement the regular budget.[111] As the flow of silver from the capital to the provinces or between provinces had rarely before occurred on the scale in the White Lotus War, deficiency silver had not been as eye-catching as "meltage fees." However, with tens of millions of taels being transported during this campaign, a small percentage of deficiency silver meant huge amounts of money—and, at times, the percentage was not even a small one.

The Qing state tried to safeguard its war funds from being siphoned off in transport and delivery. It often sent a ranking official or two plus palace guards to escort the convoy to its destination—Guwanghing was on two such missions. The provinces along the route sent officials to accompany the convoy through their jurisdictions. On the provincial border, officials of the two bordering provinces weighed containers without opening them and marked the gross weight on each of the containers.[112] When the convoy arrived at the destination, all the containers were opened in the presence of all the parties involved in the delivery, and several ingots were taken from each of the containers and weighed to determine if the silver ingots were full weight. To weigh silver ingots accurately, the Ministry of Revenue usually enclosed its own scales, the so-called treasury's scale (*kuping*), with the convoy. However, the fact that not every silver ingot was weighed on delivery left room for the logistical staff to appropriate funds by claiming "deficiency silver."

Officially, when funds were disbursed from the Ministry of Revenue's treasury and other places to a war, no deficiency was allowed. Unofficially, 1 percent of the silver could be retained as "surplus after weighing" when the funds were issued to troops or used to procure matériel by logistical staff.[113] Nevertheless, this practice was soon abused in the White Lotus War. It started in Hubei. Under Bi Yuan's auspices, Hu Qilun increased the rate from 1 percent to 4 percent and then to 8 percent. Although he insisted during his trial that the silver was significantly underweight—that is, by rates from 4 to 8 percent—when it arrived in Hubei, Hu later confessed that he needed funds to reward the armies in the Hubei theater and offset the differences between market prices and the price rates set in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* when purchasing materials from the market. In addition to the 8 taels, Hu took another 2 taels from every 100 taels for himself. In other words, 10 percent of all war funds that went through Hu's hands were retained by him in the name of "deficiency silver." Given that the funds that Hu Qilun handled amounted to more than 4.2 million taels, that 50,000 taels were found in his home on his arrest, and that his account book recorded nearly 100,000 taels given illicitly to the commanders as gifts, the total amount of silver he appropriated could have been in the hundreds of thousands. However, Hu admitted that he had misappropriated nearly 100,000 taels (more than 70,000 taels by retaining 8 percent of the war funds and more than 29,000 taels as the result of retaining an additional 2 percent of the funds).[114]

In the Sichuan theater, war funds were quietly and routinely misappropriated by using "deficiency silver" as a cover before Kuilun and Guwanghing took over the war finances in 1799. Time and time again, deficiencies were declared when the funds from Beijing or other provinces arrived. However, the successive logistical chiefs—Funing, Ingšan, and Lebao—did not report the deficiencies immediately. Nor did they consistently request that the difference be made up when the funds were sent from other provinces. Usually, the funds from Beijing were delivered to the logistical staff of Sichuan at Shenxuanyi, the first postal station in Sichuan on the highway between Sichuan and Shaanxi. Typically, Nashan, a subprefectural magistrate, was sent to receive the funds.[115] Often reporting deficiencies in the funds he received, Nashan might also have taken some funds out for himself. Once, nearly 800 taels had evaporated in addition to the alleged deficiencies when the funds reached Dazhou. Of course, Nashan did not admit any embezzlement but blamed the scales he used for being inaccurate. After Kuilun took over, he and Guwanghing dismissed and interrogated Nashan, obliging him to pay back the 800 taels and asking the Ministry of Punishment to decide his punishment. They

also suspected that Funing and Shi Zuorui were part of the fraud, trying to cover up Nashan's possible misappropriation.[116] After both Kuilun and Guwanghing were gone, this case was apparently dropped. By the autumn of 1802, Nashan still handled logistics in northern Sichuan.[117]

When the funds were distributed at the logistical bureaus in Sichuan, in addition to the 1 percent of the funds that they had routinely deducted, the staff took out another 2 to 4 percent when they paid for transportation of the supplies and other expenses (it is unclear whether they included pay to militias), although they did not do this in the case of the funds issued to the armies to pay their stipends and allowances. As a result, some recipients got only 95 to 97 taels for every 100 taels that they were supposed to receive. Then the prefects and magistrates replicated this practice when they distributed the war funds in their own jurisdictions. Cao Xiangye, the acting Kuizhou prefect who died mysteriously in 1799, retained 3.7 taels for himself from every 100 taels. Claiming that he had received only 98.5 taels of each 100 taels from the Dazhou bureau, he issued only 94.8 taels for 100 taels. In one incident, when he received 40,000 from the Dazhou bureau, he pocketed 1,480 taels. Altogether, Cao handled more than 180,000 taels of war funds during his tenure in Kuizhou. If he had retained the silver at the same rate, he could have embezzled 6,660 taels in this manner alone.[118]

Nevertheless, after Kuilun's arrival in Sichuan, there were no longer deficiencies in the funds delivered to Sichuan, either from Beijing or from other provinces. Moreover, the funds that were weighed at the three logistical bureaus often turned out to be more than what had been allocated, meaning that there was "surplus silver." In late 1799, when 400,000 taels allocated from Shanxi arrived, weighing all the silver ingots gave a total of 404,152 taels, and thus 4,152 taels in surplus. A similar scenario occurred with funds from Jiangxi.[119] In early 1800, Guwanghing and Tojin escorted 2 million taels from Beijing to Sichuan. When weighed on arrival at the three logistical bureaus, their weight totaled 2,011,096 taels, a surplus of 11,096 taels.[120] Not surprisingly, the drastic shift from deficiencies to surpluses corresponded to the change in the stewardship of logistics in Sichuan. The shift aroused Jiaqing's suspicion that the alleged deficiencies before might have been falsified, and that surplus taels in the past might have been embezzled.[121] Nevertheless, after the war-front reform was aborted and both Kuilun and Guwanghing were removed, the issue of deficiencies in the funds was not mentioned again during the remainder of the campaign.[122] Most likely, the logistical officials continued taking out some percentage of the funds in the name of "deficiency silver," and they did it quietly.

Abuse by Commanders

After the "deficiency silver" had been withheld, the war funds were distributed at the logistical bureaus in the first few years and by the logistical commissioners in the latter part of the campaign. At this phase, the army commanders came to the fore in taking advantage of the war funds. They made unjustified requests for funds, which was referred to as "abusive drawing [of funds]" (*lanzhi*). Having neither power nor will to curb their abusive requests, the logistical staff fulfilled their unjustified requests without questioning them, which was called "carelessly fulfilling [requests]" (*lanying*). As the Qianlong emperor described in late 1798:

> The commanders have fought the bandits for more than two years but have not caught all the known bandit chiefs. They know only about asking for state funds and then request [from the logistical services] and spend them excessively, benefiting themselves by making fraudulent claims. The state funds requested by you [the logistical leaders] time and time again must have been either drawn by the commanders in violation of the rules or issued conciliatorily by logistical commissioners [to the commanders] in satisfying their baseless claims.[123]

The commanders' abuses started as soon as the dynasty was mobilized to tackle the first uprisings in Hubei in 1796, when Bi Yuan led the logistics there. Having taken part in the logistical services of the second Jinchuan war, Bi might already have been conversant with the ways to take advantage of the loopholes in the wartime logistical system. Following the precedent set by Fuk'anggan in the Miao campaign, in which war funds were spent prodigally, Bi compensated the troops, militias, and laborers at rates higher than stipulated in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, overtly misappropriated war funds, and sent the ill-gotten silver to the commanders either through Hu Qilun or by himself. What was done in Hubei became the benchmarks for the other battleground provinces. Songyun once complained that it was difficult to trim overpay and illicit perks all at once without hurting the morale of the forces, blaming Bi Yuan for leading the way in breaching the logistical statutes.[124] In Sichuan, the leaders initially followed the "precedent set in Hubei" (*Chusheng chengli*).[125] However, the Hubei "precedent" would soon be surpassed when millions of taels were delivered to Sichuan in a couple of years. In the spring of 1799, in an attempt to exonerate himself, Funing accused Yimian of not following the rules in paying the armies, militias, laborers, and draft animals, and stated that he had separated his accounts from those of the former, even though he admitted that breaches of the rules had also occurred on his watch.[126] As the war progressed, it was precedents set in Sichuan that were used by other provinces when

they requested exceptions.[127]

However, at the logistical bureaus, even the inflated rates could not always be followed. Consisting of mostly lower-ranking officials and expectant officials as well as yamen clerks, the logistical staff was at the mercy of the army commanders and the viceroys, who could influence the staff's promotions but could also bring about their dismissal and punishment.[128] Therefore, the logistical staff usually chose to comply with any requests from the commanders and viceroys, no matter how unreasonable they might have been and whether or not they violated the statutes. Even Funing, a former governor-general, was not in a position to challenge the commanders, fearing that they would hold him responsible for impeding the campaign.[129] At the beginning of 1799, Song Shu, who was then the educational commissioner in Shaanxi, observed that logistical officials in Shaanxi were pressured by the generals to meet their requests and that they had to curry favor with the generals for fear of being accused of hindering operations.[130] Qianlong also thought that the commanders bore more responsibility than the logistical staff for numerous abuses in the war finances, "but the commanders are all sent from the imperial court, so the logistical commissioners dare not turn down their requests when they demand more [funds] than they are entitled to."[131] Jiaqing concurred with his father but blamed both parties: "While the commanders draw funds at will, the staff members in charge [of logistics] dare not question them. No wonder the abuses have progressively worsened."[132]

As the war zone extended across several provinces and the logistical bureaus in the different provinces paralleled each other without a centralized authority to oversee all of them, it was easy for the military to take advantage. Sometimes, the troops were served by their home province's logistical service. At other times, they were served by the logistical services in the provinces in which they fought. There were also times when supplies were provided by a third province.[133] Taking advantage, the commanders could claim funds from more than one province. In the late summer of 1798, Mingliang allegedly claimed a total of 145,000 taels for his 1,800 troops from both Shaanxi and Sichuan when he left Shaanxi for Sichuan for three weeks.[134]

Of all the generals, Delengtai was known as the most daring and reckless in demanding and spending war funds, and the most difficult to serve, always making a commotion when he was not satisfied.[135] In the early summer of 1798, when Delengtai and his seven to eight thousand men arrived in Sichuan in pursuit of the remnants of the Yao-Wang force, he acquired 90,000 taels in one month through his logistical commissioner sent by Dazhou, Hanzhong prefect Tan

Guangdian. After Tan reported this to his superior, Ingšan, the case was reported to Beijing, which led to an investigation of Delengtai's spending by the Grand Council. Having examined Delengtai's expenses, the grand councilors found that more than 40,000 taels were spent in violation of the rules stipulated in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*. They reduced Delengtai's monthly expenses from 90,000 to 13,900 taels, and obliged Delengtai to pay back the excess funds.[136]

Yet Delengtai continued drawing and spending war funds at will. In the first few months of 1799, in addition to rice, Delengtai claimed 300,000 taels from Dazhou. By the summer of 1799, in 13.5 months, he had drawn a total of 661,100 taels, and many of his expenditures were illegitimate. When Delengtai and his lieutenants' orderlies went to the logistical stations to claim stipends and allowances, no paperwork was processed.[137] However, Lebao defended Delengtai, saying that Delengtai deserved more funds because Delengtai had taken some of his own troops, ending up with twelve thousand men under him. In fact, Lebao surpassed Delengtai in spending. He acquired 2.43 million taels from Funing (2.05 million taels per Funing) in sixteen months, more than 150,000 taels per month. Lebao argued that the funds he had claimed were not only for himself and his five thousand troops but also for other generals, including Eldemboo, and for all the logistical stations as well as transportation costs.[138] Not convinced by Lebao's feeble self-defense, Jiaqing thereafter viewed Lebao as a graft suspect, which played a role in his decision to dismiss and arrest Lebao in late 1799.

In defending their excessive expenditures, the commanders often pointed to the fluctuating numbers of their troops. Indeed, it was virtually impossible for the logistical staff always to verify the armies' sizes, for they were constantly on the move, often divided and then merged, on top of casualties and repatriation. As Nayancheng and Taibu observed on their way to Shaanxi, it was a common ruse for commanders to claim numbers larger than their actual troops in order to receive more funds, and the logistical staff normally issued the funds accordingly.[139] Even sharp-eyed Guwanghing never got it right regarding the size of the regular forces in Sichuan during his six-month tenure in Dazhou. On his return to Beijing, Guwanghing complained to the emperor that most of the more than 60,000 troops to whom he had routinely issued funds had not been seen fighting for a long time, some idling in cities and towns while receiving compensation. However, about this time, Jiaqing learned from Lebao and Delengtai that there were 28,900-some troops in Sichuan. Startled at such a great discrepancy, Jiaqing ordered Lebao and Delengtai to explain.[140] It took weeks for the two to work out their defense. By

adding up all the men who could possibly be counted as regulars, they came up with a total of 37,744, saying that Guwanghing's number had included expectant soldiers and orderlies, who were on the payroll anyway. Knowing that admitting a smaller number of regulars in Sichuan would lead to a reduction in war funds, they argued that transportation costs did not go down with the decrease in size of the armies; they stood as high as 200,000 to 300,000 taels per month.[141]

Since early 1800, when Eldemboo made southern Shaanxi his base, Shaanxi had more regular forces than the other theaters, and its expenditures rose quickly, ultimately surpassing those in Sichuan, where hostilities after 1800 were sporadic and limited in scope. As Taibu estimated in early 1800, Shaanxi needed 400,000 taels per month but would need 500,000 taels per month when Eldemboo returned from Gansu, an annual total of 6 million taels.[142] In the wake of the first declaration of victory in early 1803, when only a few thousand insurgents were left, the expenditures in Shaanxi and Sichuan remained high. Outraged, Jiaqing demanded that the leaders in the three provinces report the numbers of troops in their jurisdictions, how they spent the war funds they had received in the year, and how much more they would need. To placate the emperor, Eldemboo offered somewhat deflated estimates: the three theaters together needed 330,000 to 360,000 taels per month (150,000 to 160,000 taels for Shaanxi, 110,000 to 120,000 taels for Sichuan, and 70,000 to 80,000 taels for Hubei).[143] However, a memorial by Zu Zhiwang soon after disputed what Eldemboo had claimed. Zu stated that the monthly expenses in Shaanxi had decreased from 500,000 taels to somewhat more than 300,000 taels per month in late 1802 after some troops had been repatriated. Yet, Shaanxi still needed 258,000 taels a month in 1803.[144] Until the final victory in late 1804, Shaanxi's expenditures allegedly stayed at that level.

Another common and convenient pretext for generals to request more funds was granting awards to their troops, the so-called *shanghao* practice. Having been started in the early eighteenth century, the practice became extensively abused in the late Qianlong period. Although the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* outlawed the practice, some commanders, notably Fuk'anggan, continued spending enormous amounts of war funds to award their troops in the several wars in the 1780s and 1790s, including the Miao campaign. Jiaqing often faulted Fuk'anggan for having created this practice. To acquire the money, Fuk'anggan also exacted provincial officials, salt commissioners, and internal customs supervisors.[145] Despite Jiaqing's firm disapproval, Fuk'anggan's protégés, including Eldemboo, held awards indispensable. Eldemboo admitted that he had followed the precedent set by Fuk'anggan in granting awards to meritorious troops

and civilians who provided services to the armies and that he had always demanded the funds for this purpose through his logistical commissioner.[146]

Although granting awards was widespread in the White Lotus War, it became more common to grant silver rather than silks and other materials. In the name of awards, Yimian, Ingšan, Huiling, Lebao, and Funing had claimed tens of thousands taels from war funds, Guwanghing reported.[147] In addition to requesting funds themselves, the generals also received "gifts" from local officials and logistical staff. As Qingcheng confessed when he was interrogated by Songyun, not only did he receive silver from Hu Qilun and Bi Yuan, but all the viceroys in the battleground provinces in which he had been—Jing'an, Qin Cheng'en, and Yimian, for example—had given him gifts in silver ranging from 100 to 2,000 taels. But Qingcheng insisted that all the silver he had received had been used as awards to his troops—he had not taken any himself.[148]

Not happy about it but afraid of impairing the troops' morale, Jiaqing initially chose to keep quiet.[149] But he stiffened his position as the campaign seemed to be nearing its end. At the end of 1801, when Eldemboo requested money to award his forces and civilians who had fought against the scattered insurgents, Jiaqing expressed his displeasure and again condemned Fuk'anggan for his role in starting the practice, even though he agreed that Eldemboo could take 100,000 taels for the purpose from 200,000 taels of war funds he had just allocated to Shaanxi.[150] At the beginning of 1802, in acknowledging and praising the officials in Shaanxi who had donated their "silver to nourish virtue" to commission a stockpile of winter clothes and shoes for the troops, Jiaqing ruled that further awards to the troops were no longer necessary, since victory was around the corner.[151] Ten months later, on 07/10/14, Jiaqing formally proscribed the practice when he backed a ruling by the Ministry of Revenue that no awards to the troops be allocated from war funds, citing Qianlong's ban of the practice in 1776 and reiterating his criticism of Fuk'anggan. In addition, Jiaqing reminded the commanders that no awards should be submitted as war expenditures in the auditing of war expenses.[152] As shown in chapter 5, Jiaqing's hard line in financial matters might have inadvertently contributed to prolonging the campaign, as the war leaders had to scramble for other excuses for their enormous expenditures.

Other breaches of the rules were numerous and widespread. Early in 1799, Funing admitted, implicitly, that many expenses by commanders such as Huiling, Eldemboo, and Delengtai, were against the rules.[153] In the fourth month of 1800, Eldemboo raised the "salt and vegetable allowance," a wartime stipend, from 0.9 taels per

month to 1.3 taels for all the Green Standard soldiers in Shaanxi. According to the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, 1.3 taels was the rate for the frontier, or "beyond the pass" (*kouwai*), but southern Shaanxi was "inside the pass" (*kounei*). Later, when Hu Shixian, Eldemboo's staff member, requested an increase in the Green Standard soldiers' food ration per day from 0.83 *sheng* of rice to 1 *sheng*, the grand councilors and the Ministry of Revenue endorsed the raise but ruled that their "salt and vegetable allowance" be reduced to 0.9 taels. Because the soldiers preferred more cash than food rations, Lu Youren begged to keep their allowance at 1.3 taels rather than increase their food rations. With Jiaqing's endorsement of Lu's plea, the 1.3 taels rate for all the troops in Shaanxi became virtually official.[154]

Even the reform-minded leaders bowed to faits accomplis, making concessions now and then. In late 1799, Guwanghing accused Zhu Shedou's logistical commissioner, Zhou Guoshu, of requesting 5,000 extra taels when he applied for 10,000 taels for Zhu's troops and of having not reported his expenses to the logistical bureau for two months. Allowing Zhou to remain as the logistical commissioner, Guwanghing requested to have Zhou deprived of his hat trappings. However, Kuilun defended Zhou, saying that Eldemboo had endorsed Zhou's request to apply for more funds in advance and that Zhou had not had the time to report his expenses when marching with the armies. Kuilun criticized Guwanghing for being excessively stringent and impeaching people imprudently.[155] Apparently, Kuilun could no longer stand by his earlier commitment once he had armies under his wing.

In fact, all the commanders tried to maximize the amounts of funds they could receive, including Eldemboo, who had been praised for his integrity in financial matters. Between his arrival in Sichuan in the ninth month of 1798 and the fifth month of 1799, Eldemboo received 272,000 taels from the Dazhou bureau in eight months, according to Funing. Meanwhile, Lebao claimed that Eldemboo also received 162,000 taels from him. Given the size of his army—he initially had only three thousand men but later more than nine thousand—his spending was anything but modest.[156] Nayancheng also proved to be a big spender. When 500,000 taels of war funds arrived in Shaanxi at the beginning of 1800, Songyun earmarked the lion's share, more than 332,300 taels, for Nayancheng.[157]

Even though the troops' well-being was often used as an excuse when the commanders demanded more funds than they were entitled to, the money claimed in the name of paying and awarding the troops was not always delivered into their hands. Guwanghing exposed this early in 1800: "In the past, every time war funds were delivered to the military camps, the items that were not permitted by the rules were

paid first, but soldiers' allowances and food rations were delayed. Then [the commanders] had the excuse that they no longer had enough funds to pay off the arrears. Thus, the soldiers had to suffer cold and hunger, while the commanders lined their own pockets by drawing the funds in the name of awarding the troops. Ultimately, the soldiers did not benefit from the funds at all."[158]

Ironically, it was common throughout the campaign that the soldiers as well as the militiamen did not receive their stipends and allowances for months and were poorly equipped and sometimes short of food, although it should not have cost a great deal to equip them.[159] Even Delengtai's troops were inadequately equipped, many soldiers being barefoot.[160] As acknowledged by Jiaqing, some soldiers deserted and went back to their own home garrisons because of the miserable conditions at the front.[161] The deplorable state of the armies then became the perfect bargaining chip for the commanders to request new funds from the throne. Having heard numerous reports in this regard, Jiaqing could only lament it: "Although the expenditures of the armies are enormous, the funds are often delayed in being issued [to the soldiers and militiamen] so that they have to go into action poorly supplied."[162]

In the Name of Paying the Militias

A few weeks after he arrived in Dazhou, Kuilun identified the two largest expenditures in the war: hiring long-term draft animals and porters to carry supplies for the armies, which is discussed below, and hiring militias.[163] Ultimately, the alleged costs for compensating the militias surpassed those for hiring draft animals and laborers, becoming the single largest expenditure of the war. Although hundreds of thousands of militiamen had indeed been hired, it is certain that a fairly large portion of the expenditure in their name was fraudulent, for hiring militias was one of the most convenient pretexts for commanders and local officials to justify their reckless spending and cover up the widespread embezzlement of war funds.

As the paid militias were not regulated by the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* and the emperor's ordinance to authorize compensating the militias in early 1796 was vague, there was considerable room for abuse. In both Hubei and Shaanxi, the precedents that had been set in the Shifengpu campaign were followed when the militias were first used in 1796: militiamen employed near the enemy were paid 80 *wen* per day, and militiamen who were not at the frontline were paid 60 *wen* per day, which resulted in monthly pay of 2.4 taels and 1.8 taels of silver respectively. However, as the frontlines shifted constantly, it was difficult to determine the right rates for a given area in a given period. Ultimately, the rate of 2.4 taels per month was widely adopted

and then increased to 3 to 4 taels per month.[164] As the war progressed, the militias received more benefits, such as food rations, the onetime "family settlement allowance" (usually 3 to 5 taels per person), rewards, and death pensions. The expeditionary militiamen were also assigned laborers to carry their supplies, take care of daily chores, and carry the remains of dead militiamen from the battlefield. This was usually paid as a subsidy, "the cost of hiring laborers" (*fujia*).[165] On their demobilization, they were supposed to receive settlement subsidies. The rate was dramatically raised during the campaign's long concluding phase, from 2 to 5 taels to 10 to 15 taels. In general, the militias were better compensated than the regular Green Standard soldiers, whose average monthly pay in wartime was about 2 taels (raised to 2.4 taels on an ad hoc basis during the campaign). Given the favorable compensation, many militiamen refused to enlist as regular soldiers when the opportunity was offered to them. Only in the latter part of the war was the pay to the remaining expeditionary militiamen decreased to less than 2 taels, but they received food rations at the same time. In 1804, their pay was raised to 2 taels in addition to food rations, as requested by Eldemboo and other commanders.[166]

Nevertheless, the militias, like the regulars, were often poorly equipped and inadequately supplied, and did not receive their pay on time. Of the regulars and the militias, the latter's pay was more prone to be misappropriated by the commanders. In addition, commanders and local officials claimed larger numbers of militias than they hired or longer time spans than those of their actual service. Although the militiamen's names were supposed to be reported to the Ministry of Revenue for the record, it was nearly impossible for the ministry to verify whether the names merely represented straw militiamen and whether the dates on which they were hired were accurate. Starting from 1800, when Jiaqing called for reliance on more volunteer militias to cut expenses, it is likely that the names of volunteer militiamen were sometimes mixed in to swell the ranks of the paid militias. During the audit, it was found out that 645 names were forged in one expense claim for sending the militias of Sichuan to Hubei to help in actions.[167] In early 1807, Jiaqing relentlessly lashed out against such ruses:

> Most of the fraud found in the audit involves using [the hiring of] militias as an excuse to shield abusive spending. Unlike the regular troops in the provinces, whose names are in their unit rosters, there are no fixed numbers for the militias so that their numbers can be added to at will. Moreover, there are no set dates for their hire and release, and the lengths of their service are always made up by local officials to suit their needs. There is no way to check those things. This gives rise to numerous instances of fraud. All the unreasonable or excessive expenses by the military that cannot be approved in an audit have been claimed to be spent in hiring militias.[168]

Another hothouse for fraud was the death pension. Soon after the rebellion started in Hubei and militias were hired and used in the fighting, the throne endorsed the granting of the death pension to the families of killed militiamen who had made outstanding contributions. Then, wounded militiamen were also included to receive pensions.[169] In the spring of 1799, Jiaqing extended this benefit to all killed militiamen regardless of their contribution. He also declared his intention to grant death benefits to families of militiamen who died before this date, during the first three years of the war.[170] Since it was difficult to verify the claims for the benefits, usually made by generals or officials, this opportunity encouraged fraud, including double claiming the death pension both from the logistical services in the provinces in which the militiamen were killed and from the home provinces from which the militiamen were sent to the war.[171] Meanwhile, the rate of the death pension kept climbing. Ultimately, it became 25 taels, the same as the death pension for Green Standard soldiers. If a militiaman held the title of *jiansheng* or a position in the local yamen, the rates were significantly higher (35 taels for the former and 100 taels for the latter). Ultimately, the benefit was also extended to nonmilitia civilians who died in the conflict. At the beginning of 1803, Eldemboo and Delengtai petitioned the throne to reconsider a ruling by the Ministry of War not to grant death and injury compensation to more than 270 "civilian stouts" (*minzhuang*) who had been killed on the battlefield, had died of illness after having made contributions to the campaign, or had been injured in the war, but rather to let the commanders reward them using their own money. The ministry's reason was that they were not militiamen. However, Eldemboo and Delengtai argued that those "civilian stouts" undertook the same tasks that militiamen did. Jiaqing yielded to them, ordering compensation (*xushang*) to be granted to all the killed and injured "civilian stouts" as well as those who died of illness afterward.[172] For the slain militiamen who had no family to receive the pension, 2 taels of so-called mourning allowance (*zhijiyin*) was issued per person to their superiors in the army who would offer sacrifices to the dead.[173] Undoubtedly, the money ended up in those officers' pockets.

At the beginning of 1804, the Ministry of War promulgated new rules on the militia death pension, which placed killed militiamen in three categories for graded death pensions. For those who had guarded cities or towns as well as those who had joined the fighting or marched with the armies, in the case that they had killed many rebels, they were awarded the same death pension as slain regular soldiers. If they did not kill many rebels or there was no proof of their contribution, they received only half of the death pension given to the regulars. Civilians who were killed defending their villages or forts

received no monetary compensation, but their names would be placed in shrines dedicated to the war dead (*zhaozhongci*) and their deeds sent to the Hanlin Academy for biographies to be compiled for them.[174] However, Wu Xiongguang complained that it was impossible to determine who had killed many rebels and who had not, since some of the officials who had recruited and led those militiamen had died themselves later in the conflict. In Hubei, by the summer of 1804, 8,113 slain militiamen had been compensated at the same rate as that given to the regulars, which had been endorsed by the Ministry of War. Adding the compensation to 1,354 injured militiamen, a total of 401,685.5 taels had been awarded. However, there were still 8,400 more militia casualties (6,459 deaths, and 1,941 injuries) in Hubei waiting to be reported to the ministry. Concerned that the new rules would hinder the approval of their benefits, Wu suggested paying all the militiamen, dead or injured, 25 taels. Wu's amendment was endorsed by the central government and the emperor, nullifying the earlier rules by the Ministry of War.[175] However, among nearly 18,000 reported casualties in Hubei, only 867 (711 killed and 157 injured) were verified by 1803. It is also suspicious that the dead militiamen largely outnumbered the injured.[176]

Whereas the commanders had chosen not to report militia casualties in the early stages of the campaign—both Qianlong and Jiaqing had reproached them for this—such reports proliferated shortly before the end of the war. Most likely, the opportunity to receive the death pension prompted the surge. Extremely long lists of names found in some gazetteers were usually copied from the names on the steles in the shrines to commemorate the dead in this war. Apparently, some straw names were blended in.[177] Although falsified militia casualties helped the commanders and officials, those who were indeed dead or injured were not always compensated. In 1804, the son of a militiaman of Hubei's Xiaogan traveled to Beijing and pleaded the case that his family had not received any pension for his father, who organized a militia and was killed in battle in 1796.[178] In 1811, shortly after Changming succeeded Lebao as governor-general of Sichuan, he reported that the pensions due to over three thousand militiamen who had been killed or wounded in Sichuan between 1797 and 1799 had not reached their families or themselves.[179] Likely, Lebao had either diverted or embezzled the money.

To place a brake on the unhampered hires, real or forged, in the summer of 1799, Sichuan logistical officials ruled that bigger departments and counties could hire a maximum of two thousand militiamen and smaller ones a maximum of three hundred to one thousand militiamen. Although the quotas seem to have been adopted in other provinces afterward, it was bound to be difficult to enforce

them. As keeping a few thousand militiamen on the payroll was a convenient way to maintain the flow of silver their way—it could amount to thousands of taels a month—many magistrates refused to cut the militias. In early 1800, the magistrate of Nanbu, a county in northern Sichuan, abruptly refused Kuilun and Guwanghing's request to reduce the militiamen in his county from more than 2,500 to 1,000. Furthermore, he asked for funds to support all of the 2,500 militiamen. Although Guwanghing wished to turn down the request, Kuilun was inclined to grant the funds, concerned that the cut militiamen would make trouble after not being able to take care of their own livelihoods for half a year. Convinced, Guwanghing gave 12,200 taels to the magistrate but enclosed a letter telling him to make the cuts. The magistrate took the money but ignored Guwanghing's letter. Shortly afterward, he made yet another request for funds, which prompted Guwanghing to report the case to the emperor, hoping he would endorse some disciplinary action against the magistrate. However, overwhelmed by the fiascos at the Jialing River front, Jiaqing had just changed his position with regard to paid militias from disapproval to total endorsement. Jiaqing scolded Guwanghing instead for being too fastidious.[180]

In the spring of 1801, when a small group of rebels intruded into southeastern Gansu, more than twenty counties in Gansu hired militias to guard cities and towns. Although the alarm lasted for merely a couple of months, the expenditures were not moderate; approximately 39,500 taels were spent to pay those hired militias. As shown in Table 7.4, six counties hired more militiamen than allowed by the quotas and paid all of them at the higher rate of 80 *wen* of coin per day. It was decided later that about one-fifth of the total cost of 29,734 taels was in excess.[181]

Even when the campaign was in its last stages, when only thousands and then hundreds of rebels remained at large, costs in the name of paying militias remained substantial. In Sichuan, hiring and paying militiamen lasted longest, spanning the period from the autumn of 1796 to the spring of 1805.[182] In Sichuan's Pengxi county, which was not a hot spot except at the beginning of 1800, a total of 74,675 taels was spent in compensating militias.[183] In Dazhou, even though peace was restored in late 1800, its militia-related expenses totaled 250,000 taels between 1803 and 1805.[184] In the fourth month of 1805, two months after the last militiamen were cut in Sichuan, however, Lebao and Delengtai still tried to take advantage of them. In their proposal on postwar reconstruction, they requested funds from the central government to pay soldiers and former militiamen the stipends owed to them. This time, the grand councilors and the two former generals of the campaign, Eldemboo and Mingliang, turned the

proposal down on the grounds that it might invite fraudulent claims.[185]

TABLE 7.4: Excess Militias Hired in Gansu in 1801 (Second and Third Months)

NUMBER HIRED	COUNTY
[illegible]	Gaotai
[illegible]	Qinghui
[illegible]	Longxi
[illegible]	Pingliang
[illegible]	Jingchuan
[illegible]	Gongchang
[illegible]	Tongwei
[illegible]	Jingyuan

Source: NGDK, 109909.

On Eldemboo's watch, the expenses to pay the militias in Shaanxi were not moderate either. In Xing'an prefecture, nearly a quarter of a million taels were spent on paying militiamen between 1800 and 1805, even though no serious hostilities took place there after mid-1801, as shown in Table 7.5. In southern Shaanxi, the total cost of paying the militias for local defense from 1800 through 1805 was 922,205 taels. Meanwhile, the Qing commanders in Shaanxi, including Eldemboo, claimed 793,396 taels in the name of paying expeditionary militiamen who were attached to their regiments, as shown in Table 7.6.[186] Combined with the money spent by local governments in paying the militias, the total cost was more than 1.7 million taels in the war's lingering finale in the Shaanxi theater.

In 1806, during the audit, Hubei reported to the Ministry of Revenue that more than 4.7 million taels of silver and more than 230,000 *shi* of rice had been spent for more than 366,700 militiamen in the province in the first three years of the war. When briefed on this, Jiaqing could not help but rebut the figures as "apparently fraudulent." He thus ruled that Sichuan and Shaanxi exercise self-censorship, cutting the numbers to a reasonable level, before they submitted their claims on militia costs for auditing.[187] Yet, the figures submitted to the ministry by Sichuan for the audit were still staggering. Although there was no overall figure for the whole province, one claim lists that, in the first three years, Sichuan's Taiping subprefecture and Kaixian county spent a total of 327,622 taels paying militias, and the total cost in Dazhou subprefecture was 467,697 taels. Combined, the three places claimed nearly 800,000 taels.[188] Given the scale of hiring militiamen in Sichuan during this period, surpassing 340,000, the total cost must not have been much lower than that in Hubei.[189]

TABLE 7.5: Cost of Hiring Militias in Xing'an Prefecture, Shaanxi, 1800–1805

COUNTY (XING'AN PREFECTURE)	AMOUNT (TAELS)
Xing'an prefect	[illegible]
Ankang	46,460
Baiyang	23,888
Hanyin	18,311
Langao	27,427
Shiquan	37,376
Ningshan	34,168
Hanyin	18,502
Total	249,284

Source: NGDK, 56763-001.

TABLE 7.6: Costs Claimed by Commanders in Shaanxi for Hiring Militiamen, 1800–1805

NAME	AMOUNT (TAELS)
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

Long-Term Mules and Long-Term Laborers

As Kuilun pointed out in 1799, paired with the cost of the militias, another colossal expenditure was the hiring of "long-term mules" (*changluo*) and "long-term laborers" (*changfu*) to carry foodstuffs and matériel for the armies.[192] According to what had been laid down in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, draft animals were chiefly used by logistical stations to transport foodstuffs, uniforms, and ammunition, and they were paid for by distance. All officers, bannermen, and Green Standard cavalrymen were entitled to possess service horses, so-called regular horses (*lima*), and received a "horse fodder subsidy" (*magan*), an allowance to maintain the horses. When the armies were deployed to war, they were supposed to use those "regular horses" and received fodder only en route and in the war zone. The troops who did not have regular horses were permitted to hire draft animals or laborers to carry their luggage only en route to the rendezvous; the number of draft animals and laborers was determined by the weight of their luggage. After the armies arrived at their destinations, every hundred Manchu troops would receive fifty orderlies, every hundred Green Standard cavalrymen received thirty intern soldiers (*yuding*) and twenty laborers (*suiyingfu*), and every hundred Green Standard infantry troops (*shoubing*) were given thirty laborers.[193] As such, it should not have been necessary to hire additional draft animals or porters. Hence, neither "long-term mules" nor "long-term laborers" were included in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*.

However, the reality was not as straightforward. The numbers of service horses of the two Qing military forces, the banners and the Green Standard Army, had dramatically declined since the late Qianlong era. Because of economic pressures, many officers and cavalrymen had sold their horses but continued to receive the horse allowance as extra income. When they were deployed to war, they had to scramble for horses. Consequently, the armies had to hire horses and other draft animals to carry out the work that should have been undertaken by their own service horses. In the second Gurkha war, expenses incurred on horses and other draft animals had been much higher than were allowed, which was one of the major reasons for the high expenditure of that war.[194] When the Hubei troops were deployed to the Miao campaign in 1795, Bi Yuan made a motion to amend the rules to give every hundred Green Standard infantry troops thirty intern soldiers, the same as Green Standard cavalrymen. The Ministry of Revenue ratified it.[195] Yet the commanders in the Miao campaign hired more horses and laborers than allowed, for the personnel that were supposed to have service horses did not bring them to the front. Consequently, many double-dipped, receiving both the horse allowance at their home garrisons and the money to hire horses or

mules at the front. Meanwhile, more laborers than allowed were hired in the campaign. When the expense claims were submitted to the Ministry of Revenue for auditing, the sharp-eyed Hešen detected abuses and turned them down one by one shortly before his own demise.[196]

In the White Lotus War, hiring long-term laborers started as soon as the conflict broke out. In the spring of 1796, when Yimian headed to Shangnan to try to prevent the spread of the rebellion from Hubei to Shaanxi, Yao Xueying, Shaanxi's administrative commissioner, hired laborers to repair the roads in the Qinling Mountains and thousands of long-term mules to transport supplies to Shangnan.[197] In Henan, Jing'an hired thousands of mules and camels in late 1796 to transport supplies to the armies.[198] When Sun Shiyi led hundreds of Sichuan troops to the Sichuan-Hubei border in the spring of 1796, he hired hundreds of long-term laborers as well.[199] In Hubei, Wang Xin hired long-term laborers to march with the armies before the war entered its second year. He paid them 6 taels of silver and 30 *sheng* of rice per month. For transporting foodstuffs between grain stations, Wang was inclined to reduce the number of laborers and use the saved money to increase the pay to the remaining laborers, while hiring more draft animals, for an able-bodied mule could carry more than twice what a laborer could.[200]

Although the rationale to use more draft animals was to save money, the war zone was not awash with horses and mules. Both Wang Xin and Jing'an had to send agents to neighboring areas and other provinces to purchase them.[201] Naturally, high demand and low supply drove up their prices. Soon it became much more expensive to either purchase or hire draft animals than to use human labor. But it did not deter the commanders from using them. When Yimian went to Sichuan in early 1797, he took with him long-term mules. When the Qing forces pursued the Xiangyang insurgents to Sichuan in the summer of 1797, they did the same, but the price had skyrocketed to 15 to 18 taels per mule per month. Since every hundred troops were allegedly given fifty mules and there were about twenty thousand troops in Sichuan, tens of thousands of mules were needed. Even though the price was later lowered to 12 taels per month, it would have cost 120,000 taels every month for this expenditure alone.

Given the enormous cost and the outright breach of the regulations, the logistical staff complained and tried to cut the numbers of long-term mules. However, Yimian, who had become the commander-in-chief of the campaign, defended the practice and refused to accept what had been proposed by the logistical staff—to give every hundred soldiers ten long-term mules or twenty long-term laborers—as he deemed the number of mules insufficient to serve the troops.

Ultimately, a compromise was reached: whereas every hundred Manchu bannermen received twenty-five long-term mules, every hundred Green Standard soldiers received twenty mules or thirty long-term laborers. Laborers were paid 3 taels and a food ration of 30 *sheng* of rice per month, whereas 9 taels per month could be spent to hire long-term mules, and the mule drivers did not receive food rations.[202] This expenditure alone might have amounted to multiple millions of taels a year.

Nevertheless, even the compromise failed to be observed. During Mingliang's three-week excursion in Sichuan in the summer of 1798, he claimed a total of 15,503 taels for hiring more than 2,200 laborers, who were paid 3 taels per month, and more than 1,300 mules that cost between 10.8 and 12 taels per month.[203] Delengtai was no less freehanded. In thirteen months, his force had allegedly spent more than 226,960 taels on mules and laborers. Although he did not hire more mules than allowed for bannermen, he allegedly gave forty, instead of thirty, laborers to every hundred Green Standard troops. Furthermore, his officers and staff as well as their orderlies all received laborers, and he hired additional mules and laborers to carry cannons and ammunition. Unlike the hired militias whose names were supposed to be submitted to the Ministry of Revenue for recording, hired laborers and mules were not subject to any regulation. More particularly, the logistical bureaus did not hire them but only issued the funds to the commanders upon their request, and then the latter hired either laborers or mules themselves. Most likely, a good portion of this expenditure was turned into wartime perquisites for the commanders. As exposed by Kuilun, each time war funds arrived, the expenses for long-term mules and laborers were immediately allocated to the armies, but the pay to the troops was always delayed.[204] Even Lebao admitted that the practice had been abused ever since its inception in Shaanxi and Hubei (in order to deflect the brunt of the criticism from himself).[205]

Likely counting on his good relationship with Hešen, Lebao had taken a different approach in freeing himself from the statute. After he arrived in Sichuan in early 1798, Lebao had Ingšan and Funing draw up a list of the expenditures that were not sanctioned in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* but were "absolutely necessary." In the summer of 1798, Lebao and Funing submitted it to the Ministry of Revenue and requested that the listed expenditures be ratified as amendments to the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*. However, Hešen rejected each and every item and insisted that it was redundant to hire long-term mules and laborers because the rules in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* should have met the needs of the armies. When the ruling reached Sichuan, Lebao complained that some of Hešen's decisions were "by

no means observable." He merely distributed the ministry's response to all the logistical bureaus and logistical commissioners but did not press them to follow it. Therefore, Sichuan continued hiring long-term mules and laborers, despite the objection writ large by the central government.[206] After Hešen's death, Sichuan made more noise, complaining about soaring transportation costs because the pay to laborers had to be increased owing to detours to dodge the rebels. In the summer of 1799, Lebao and Funing submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Revenue in which they requested endorsement for hiring twenty long-term mules for every hundred troops at the rate of 9 taels per month. However, Jiaqing warned them that the ministry would not repeal Hešen's ruling if the latter had already rebutted their proposed amendments.[207] For the second time, Lebao failed to have long-term mules and laborers sanctioned.

During the brief war-front reform, the issue became a fuse in the open and bitter rift between Kuilun and Eldemboo. Arguing that the laborers and intern soldiers assigned to the troops in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* were not sufficient—being only enough for carrying equipment and ammunition with no laborers left to carry uniforms and luggage—Eldemboo gave forty laborers to every hundred troops. In addition, he had Li Hong, his logistical commissioner, hire five hundred long-term mules for carrying out "long-term transportation" (*changyun*). The corps was led by a magistrate, and each mule was hired at 9.7 taels per month. Clearly aware that the hirings were one of the most abused practices, Kuilun conceded, however, that some long-term mules might have been necessary, owing to the insurgents' guerrilla warfare, which forced the armies to be constantly on the move. Still, he was not convinced that it was reasonable for Eldemboo to hire five hundred mules in addition to increasing the number of long-term laborers and to pay for each mule at a rate even higher than that proposed by Lebao, 9 taels per month. In his memorial reporting this matter, Kuilun proposed to keep the practice, because it had occurred and been endorsed during the Miao campaign, but to lower the rate paid for draft animals. However, Jiaqing angrily rejected the practice altogether, saying that the Miao areas were frontiers, but Sichuan and Shaanxi were heartlands. More particularly, he was irate at the fact that the rate was even higher than that under Lebao, suspecting that Kuilun had been fooled by the logistical staff, which used this item to conceal their misappropriation of funds or to fill gaps in the accounts due to malpractice in earlier periods—but he did not blame Eldemboo at all.[208]

Under pressure from both the throne and the commanders, Kuilun tried to find a middle ground. He and Guwanghing, who concurred with Kuilun on the issue, proposed to allow forty long-term laborers

hired for every hundred Green Standard soldiers, cavalrymen and infantrymen alike, at the rate of 2.4 taels per laborer per month. At this rate, 52,800 taels per month and 630,000 taels per year were required for all the forces in Sichuan. The armies could use the money to hire either porters or mules. As they argued, although the number exceeded what was stipulated by the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, compared with the Lebao-Funing proposal of twenty mules per hundred troops at 9 taels per mule per month, the expenses were slashed from 180 to 96 taels per hundred troops. Meanwhile, they proposed to rein in the double-dipping by bannermen and officers by cutting in half their regular horse allowance and cutting in half the money paid to them to hire horses or mules, the so-called draft animal allowance (*tuozhe*). Citing the danger faced by mule drivers at the front, they bargained with the emperor to raise the rate from 4.5 taels, as set in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*, to 9 taels per mule per month and from 0.15 taels, as ruled by the Ministry of Revenue, to 0.3 taels for draft animals transporting supplies from one grain station to another. The two warned that what they proposed was the bottom line and that anything lower would have undesirable consequences. That the two reform-minded officials had shifted to demanding compromises to the rules must have affected the emperor, who gave in this time, agreeing to forty long-term laborers per hundred soldiers and the proposed compromise on horse benefits to bannermen and officers. However, he stopped short of making official amendments to the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* but said that he would intervene himself if the Ministry of Revenue rejected claims on those expenditures when the war expenses were audited.[209]

As such, the emperor tried to preempt criticism from the central bureaucracy while placating the commanders in the war. In fact, Jiaqing's decision on the Kuilun-Guwanghing recommendation virtually confirmed a new wartime bonus for bannermen and Green Standard officers. Referred to as the "draft animal and laborer allowance" (*tuozhe fujia* or *tuozhe fuma*), this extra pay was soon adopted in all the battleground provinces.[210] By substituting "horses" with *tuo* (literally meaning camels, but meaning draft animals in general), the rate was dramatically raised, since prices to hire mules were much higher than those for horses. Nevertheless, there was no mechanism to verify whether the two cohorts, bannermen and officers, used the funds to make hires, let alone whether the proposed cuts were carried out.[211] For the remainder of the war, the alleged cost of paying for laborers and draft animals stayed persistently high. From time to time, viceroys requested to increase laborer wages and the rate for hiring draft animals.[212] In the autumn of 1800, Lebao and Delengtai claimed that the expenses for transporting supplies in

Sichuan were 200,000 to 300,000 taels per month, which exceeded the pay to all the deployed troops in Sichuan.[213] When Wesingge and Qiu Xingjian put forward their recommendations in mid-1801 following their war-front inspection, they admitted that the transportation cost was higher than that of the supplies. Yet they considered the high costs justified somewhat by exigencies and dangers at the front.[214] Most likely lobbied or even bribed by field commanders and local officials, the two commissioners willingly spoke on their behalf.

Not until the concluding phase of the campaign did the leaders of the different theaters set their hand to cutting extra perquisites granted to the armies, including the "draft animal and laborer allowance."[215] It is surprising that there are so few cases involving "long-term mules" or the "draft animal and laborer allowance" in the extant records of the audit of war expenses. In other words, the war expenses, as reflected in the audit, did not corroborate Kuilun's 1799 observation that hiring draft animals and laborers was one of the two most expensive expenditures of the war (the other being the hiring of militias). It is possible that Jiaqing did not honor his promise to tell the Ministry of Revenue to give the green light to those items. As a result, the parties involved in war logistics would have had to scramble for justifiable expenses, which might have caused the inflated figures in militia-related expenses.

Local Government Takes Advantage

Contrary to the common perception that war funds were meant primarily to support the armies, what the armies consumed in the White Lotus War, including the misappropriations by commanders, constituted only a relatively small portion of the total war costs. A larger portion of the war funds was siphoned off by the different levels of the local governments in the battleground provinces. To a degree, the setup of the Qing fiscal system contributed to this outcome. The outbreak of the White Lotus War in 1796 coincided with the start of a universal tax remission to celebrate Qianlong's retirement, which was to be completed in three years. Soon after the uprisings erupted first in Hubei and then in Sichuan and Shaanxi, the throne granted tax remissions, deductions, or postponements to departments and counties affected by the hostilities. As the campaign progressed, some areas received tax benefits repeatedly.[216] While some counties and departments lost their entire revenue for a year or more through tax remissions or postponements, their provincial governments were also deprived of a portion of their revenues. In general, Qing policy was vague regarding what local government could do to make up the shortfalls when it sustained revenue losses due to disasters or

remissions.[217] Since the central government did not provide any subsidies, local governments had to scramble for money from every possible source, including "borrowing" from the provincial treasury as well as local merchants and other residents, although the emperor strictly forbade them to exact civilians. Two or three years into the White Lotus War, the battleground provinces' coffers were emptied; provincial officials complained loudly and frequently.[218]

Although the local governments in the war zone did not receive a lump sum of funds for their participation in the campaign, local officials could claim funds for war-related projects, including hiring militias and draft animals, from the logistical services. Each time war funds arrived, officials rushed to the logistical bureaus to be reimbursed for expenses they had made and to request funds for other projects. Then they readily appropriated the war funds to pay for their routine expenses, such as officials' stipends, "silver to nourish virtue" allowances, and stipends to the garrison troops, including those who had not been deployed to the war.[219] In the summer of 1798, when explaining why the war funds were used up so fast in Hubei, Jing'an and G'aoki told the throne candidly that the departments and counties affected by the rebellion in Hubei depended on war funds to support their routine operations because their taxes had been remitted or postponed, and nothing was left for them to use.[220] Late in 1799, Lebao reported that the costs to support regulars and expeditionary militias in the campaign were not the biggest war expenditures. Rather, war funds distributed to and spent by local officials were immense. Although Lebao listed some war-related expenses, such as hiring laborers and draft animals to transport matériel to the armies, paying the staff at all the grain stations, and manufacturing army uniforms and ammunition, he admitted that war funds were also used to meet the needs of all the departments and counties. Pointing to the facts that the provincial treasury was empty, that more than half of Sichuan's taxes had been remitted, and that the levies from customs and salt sales had been lower than usual, Lebao claimed: "[We] cannot make ends meet. We have to appropriate war funds to pay for the armies' stipends, officials' salaries and 'silver to nourish virtue' allowances, and the expenses to support the military forces stationed in Tibet and along the highway to Tibet."[221]

No sooner had Kuilun arrived in Sichuan in late 1799 than he observed this phenomenon. In addition to confirming what others had reported, Kuilun revealed that the war funds delivered to Chengdu were most prone to be diverted. As he put it: "All the officials' salaries and the troops' stipends have been paid through the [war] funds stored in Chengdu's logistical bureau. Therefore, although the war funds have been used, they have been used to pay for the province's

expenses, having nothing to do with the needs of the campaign."[222] Since all three main battleground provinces had set up one logistical bureau in their provincial capitals, Wuchang, Xi'an, and Chengdu, it was convenient for the provincial governments to take advantage of the war funds. In Sichuan, although most of the war funds were delivered to Dazhou in the first few years, the funds sent to Chengdu were not small in quantity. After the rebels' Jialing River crossing in early 1800, more funds were sent to Chengdu as the battleground moved westward.[223] Aware of the pitfalls of giving Chengdu too large a financial allowance, Tojin warned the staff of the Chengdu bureau to draw a clear line between war logistics and local affairs, and not to use the war funds for routine business. Once peace was restored in western Sichuan, Tojin instructed Chengdu to send some of the funds to Dazhou, but it is not clear whether the order was followed.[224] However, when Lebao abolished the Dazhou and Baoning bureaus and centralized war finances in Chengdu, it would have become more convenient for Sichuan to appropriate war funds. Although the funds that arrived for the remainder of the war were still distributed among Chengdu, Dazhou, and Baoning, Chengdu received an increasingly large share.[225] In Shaanxi, the logistical bureau in Xi'an had a unique opportunity to avail itself of funds since all funds from Beijing to the war zone had to pass through Xi'an. Sometimes the Xi'an bureau intercepted funds designated for other bureaus.[226]

Despite Jiaqing's constant preaching that war funds were to be spent only for the armies and not on local business, the war funds always vanished quickly in the battleground provinces.[227] To be sure, diverting and misappropriating war funds were not limited to the provincial level. As Guwanghing pointed out in early 1800, governments at every level, provincial, prefectural, and county, were all eager to take advantage of war funds.[228] In fact, the prefectural, subprefectural, departmental, and county officials were probably more aggressive in doing so. As is well known, magistrates in late imperial China were poorly compensated and their offices understaffed, despite their all-inclusive and generally onerous duties. Although it is a commonplace that magistrates preyed on the people in their jurisdictions for additional funds through exactions and surcharges, it was still difficult for them to make ends meet.[229] However, when they were charged with handling ad hoc tasks, such as those in wartime and public projects initiated by their superiors or the central government—water projects and disaster relief, for example—prefects and magistrates could access funds allocated from outside sources, usually in amounts much larger than their meager regular budgets, which made such occasions financial opportunities for underfunded local officials even though their responsibilities multiplied and their

routines were complicated.

During the White Lotus War, local governments in the war zone were all involved in the operations, military and logistical, and thus had access to extraordinarily large amounts of war funds. Besides local officials and clerks recruited into the logistical services, either working at the logistical bureaus or embedded in the armies, other local government personnel were also obliged to provide various services and assistance to the campaign. Unlike those in the logistical system, who were at the mercy of their bosses and the commanders, the prefects and magistrates who stayed in their jurisdictions had more freedom and leeway in taking advantage of the campaign. Given the unprecedented involvement of local society in this campaign, precedents and the statutes were not enough to guide the logistical staff in dealing with prefects, magistrates, and their agents who swarmed to their doors and demanded funds. Invigorated and empowered by their wartime responsibility, prefects and magistrates would threaten to accuse the logistical staff of obstructing operations if they did not get what they requested. Typically, the logistical staff bowed to their demands, issuing tens of thousands of taels each time without verifying their claims. As Guwanghing exposed: “It has now become widespread in Sichuan that crooked prefects and magistrates try to profit from war funds. If the logistical bureaus do not honor their requests, they [threaten the bureaus by] saying that [the bureaus] are messing up their jurisdictions, and they will report it to the governor-general. If they are given the funds, they spend them at liberty, citing preexisting deficits due to the duty to support the campaign.”[230]

Guwanghing had repeatedly admonished the logistical staff to take their duty seriously and warned them that he would impeach anyone breaching the rules. However, his words had fallen on deaf ears, and no improvement had taken place. In early 1800, the vocal Guwanghing brought three cases of excessive abuse to Jiaqing’s attention in courting royal support for his crusade against war-front corruption. In fact, the memorial by Guwanghing dated 05/01/14 is the only extant record that provides detailed information on the scandalous abuses of war funds at the prefectural and county levels.[231]

The first accused was Yan Zhaobiao, Kuizhou prefect. Three months after his appointment in the late summer of 1799, Yan had claimed more than 140,000 taels from the Dazhou logistical bureau, even though Yan was responsible for supplying only Qishiwu’s force of several thousand men stationed in the city of Kuizhou, and there had been little fighting in eastern Kuizhou. Shocked by the disproportionate expenses in Kuizhou, Guwanghing exhorted Yan to spend the funds carefully and sparingly. Not heeding Guwanghing’s

advice, Yan requested another 49,000 taels from Dazhou within two months, making the total of the funds he had received more than 189,000 taels. Yet Yan had not paid the militias in his prefecture. It turned out that Yan had used the funds to make up the duties collected at the Kuiguan customhouse, which he had appropriated, according to Guwanghing. Not denying that he had embezzled the duties collected, Prefect Yan argued, however, that customs duties were used to support the banner garrison in Chengdu so they had to be made up, even with war funds.[232] As the gateway to Sichuan along the Yangzi River, the Kuiguan customhouse had an annual quota for the duties of 183,740 taels of silver. But in 1799 only 113,440 taels had been collected because the war caused a decrease in traffic through Kuizhou.[233] Nevertheless, the shortfall of 70,337.2 taels remained outstanding at the end of 1800,[234] which means Yan had not told the truth about where the 189,000 taels of war funds had gone. Interestingly, Yan's predecessor, Cao Xiangye, who had misappropriated war funds by retaining "deficiency silver," had stayed in Kuizhou to "assist" Yan in financial matters before he was investigated and then died on his way home to Chongqing, although it is not clear what role Cao might have played in this case.[235]

The second case involved Li Yuan, the Langzhong magistrate. Peripheral to the combat zone in northern Sichuan, Langzhong, also the seat of Baoning prefecture, was on the doorstep of the Baoning logistical bureau. At times, Li had been employed by the bureau while still serving as Langzhong's magistrate—it was common during the campaign for local officials to serve two domains simultaneously. By late 1798, Li had claimed more than 290,000 taels from the Baoning bureau, which was more than 150 times the annual budget of a county government of Langzhong's size. When Guwanghing passed Langzhong on his way to Dazhou, he inquired as to the usage of the funds. Li could not produce a credible account itemizing his expenses. Guwanghing instantly wrote to Kuilun, asking him to investigate the magistrate. At the time Guwanghing submitted his memorial, Kuilun had not considered the case. However, an acting circuit intendant in Baoning had reported to Guwanghing that Li Yuan had not changed his manner of handling war funds.[236]

The third case features Ma Mingluan, the acting magistrate of Guangyuan, also in Baoning prefecture. Ma became acting magistrate in the eighth month of 1799—given that many prefects and magistrates had been absorbed into the logistical services, their offices were often run by surrogates. Late in 1799, when Eldemboo was fighting in the area, the former asked Ma to hire mules to transport supplies for his forces. After Eldemboo left the area, Ma eliminated some of the hired mules because Guwanghing had warned him to

demobilize all the mules. However, Ma requested to be permitted to turn those still in service into "long-term mules" for his yamen and to pay for them at the rate of 9 taels per mule per month with war funds. Ma argued that his county had spent over 10,000 taels on the campaign so that he wanted to use war funds to make up the financial shortfalls of his yamen. Deeming this an abuse of war funds, Guwanghing also reported that Ma's accounts were nebulous, including items that could not be verified.[237] In fact, hiring "long-term mules" had not been limited to the armies. Both the logistical staffs and the local governments in the battleground provinces had adopted this practice, which became a convenient excuse for some officials to expand their financial leverage or line their own pockets.

With overtones critical of Kuilun's relaxed manner in dealing with abuses, Guwanghing proposed to oblige the three officials to go to Dazhou and have all their accounts scrutinized at the Dazhou logistical bureau. Even in the event that they had not embezzled war funds, they should be ordered to pay back the portion of the funds that they had spent illicitly or excessively, Guwanghing insisted.[238] Jiaqing approved those actions and instructed Kuilun to look into the cases, rendering necessary punishment if what Guwanghing reported was true. However, the Jialing River crisis shortly after altered Jiaqing's priorities. Kuilun was soon purged, and Guwanghing was called back. None of the three officials received any punishment.[239] During the remainder of the campaign, no one, neither commander nor logistical official, again submitted an exposé comparable to those by Guwanghing, although abuses certainly went on.

The local governments in the war zone had to come up with legitimate expenditures in order to pass audits. In addition to paying militias and transportation of supplies, the most convenient covers for abuses and misappropriations, several other expenditures were also used to serve this end. One was purchasing grain to replenish the emptied ever-normal granaries. Local governments had indeed purchased grain from markets for either supplying troops or replenishing the granaries.[240] In Sichuan, however, this was the chief excuse for sending a great portion of war funds to the logistical bureau in Chengdu, which was far away from the frontline. Soon after taking commandership in 1799, Jiaqing expressed his suspicion over Sichuan's request to use war funds to purchase 2 million *shi* of grain, thinking it a hidden way to misappropriate the funds.[241] His vigilance continued even when the new leaders he had sent were in charge.

In the autumn of 1799, when 2 million taels of war funds arrived from Beijing, Kuilun and Funing earmarked 1 million taels and sent them to the Chengdu bureau to fund restocking the granaries in the province. But Guwanghing raised an eyebrow, for he doubted that the

grain purchased would be used for the troops in the campaign and suspected it was merely to keep up the granaries' reserve quotas, which in his opinion was an act of misappropriation.[242] Concurring with Guwanghing, Jiaqing ruled that military needs should take priority, although he said that he understood Kuilun's intention—he must have been concerned that magistrates would levy surcharges on the taxpayers if not given funds to restock the granaries. Additionally, Jiaqing suspected that granary restocking might be one of the schemes that local officials would use to help themselves survive the audits after the campaign, for they needed justifications for all the funds that had been siphoned off.[243]

Nevertheless, Jiaqing chose to yield to Sichuan—his penchant to be unsure of his own judgment again got the best of him. He first allocated 500,000 taels to Chengdu for purchasing grain and then allocated another 2 million taels to Sichuan for the campaign.[244] Overjoyed, both Kuilun and Guwanghing vowed that the grain purchased would indeed be for the troops (they reported that Lin Jun had already requisitioned grain from merchants and was awaiting funds to pay them) and that they would not mingle war expenditures with provincial ones. In an interesting shift in his position, Guwanghing joined Kuilun in pleading for 900,000 taels to be sent to Chengdu, for 500,000 taels was not sufficient, given the many tasks the Chengdu bureau had to assume besides restocking the granaries.[245] Despite their promises, many granaries in Sichuan, especially those near the battlegrounds, remained empty for the rest of the campaign.[246]

Another convenient excuse used by local government was relief to dislocated civilians. Throughout the campaign, local governments had requested relief funds for providing food, shelter, and agricultural aids such as seeds, oxen, and tools to the displaced as the conflicts spread and following the restoration of peace in a particular location.[247] However, it was difficult to verify what had been really done. In the late spring of 1799, when 2.5 million taels arrived in Sichuan, Lebao earmarked 500,000 taels as relief funds. He identified more than thirty places in eastern and northern Sichuan as most urgently in need of relief. Lebao planned to use 100,000 taels to feed and shelter the refugees who had escaped from the rebels and 400,000 taels to provide two months of food rations for the neediest in those places. He would select prefects and magistrates known to be "clean" and let them identify the neediest households and hand out the relief money. The rest of the residents, as Lebao explained, would have to wait until new funds came—he had just requested another 500,000 taels from the throne. If 500,000 taels were only sufficient for selected households to survive for two months, the total cost of the

undertaking would have been enormous. More particularly, it would be difficult to confirm whether the neediest households throughout all the areas received the funds. Immensely upset by Lebao's proposal, Jiaqing condemned Lebao for using relief work to cover up his possible embezzlement of war funds.[248] When Kuilun and Guwanghing came to Sichuan, they too expressed doubts about the credibility of Lebao's relief work.[249] However, they did not have a chance to investigate it during their short stay in Dazhou.

Yet relief work could not be put off, as the emperor constantly stressed the importance of resettling dislocated civilians in order to sterilize the feeding ground of the rebels. After Lebao was reinstated and returned to Sichuan, he kept pressing for more leeway in this undertaking. In a controversial proposal he submitted at the end of 1800, Lebao insisted on offering food and cash to the dislocated daily, extending the benefits to sojourning merchants and farmers from other provinces who had no household registration. In the spring of 1799, the central government had rejected providing relief to sojourners. Although Jiaqing chose not to be too stringent this time—he no longer had the will to overhaul the war leadership after the demise of his war-front reform—he deferred giving his opinion on the issue of sojourners by sending the proposal to the Ministry of Revenue for deliberation.[250]

A long-established way of providing relief to civilians was the scheme of relief through construction projects. Instead of providing the people on relief with money or food, the government recruited them for construction projects and paid them wages. In the White Lotus campaign, Bi Yuan first used this method at the beginning of 1797; he recruited refugees and local residents who had lost their livelihoods to build city walls in Fancheng. Bi estimated that the total cost would be between 100,000 and 200,000 taels, and planned first to use war funds and then to reimburse Hubei's war coffers with money from selling rebel property. Apparently, it was an opportunity for local officials to pad their account books. More particularly, Bi let none other than Hu Qilun oversee this project.[251]

The scheme was not used often in the early stages of the long campaign, perhaps because there were many other ways for local officials to take advantage of war funds. Not until the early spring of 1803 was the method again invoked. As recounted in chapter 5, Eldemboo proposed that 400,000 taels from war funds be earmarked to hire demobilized militiamen to fortify towns and villages. Angered at the proposal, Jiaqing relentlessly ripped Eldemboo for stepping into civilian affairs, creating a pretext for requesting more funds by keeping demobilized militiamen on the payroll, and prolonging the war. Despite Jiaqing's anger, this scheme may have been widely used

in the battleground provinces toward the end of the campaign as well as in its wake. In addition to building forts and ramparts, a flurry of minor construction projects were carried out by local officials, such as repairing or building city walls, yamen offices, temples, shrines, and academies.[252] Practical needs aside, those projects helped, temporarily, to alleviate the burden of accommodating suddenly unemployed militiamen and military laborers and to keep in work many officials, especially expectant ones, who had come to the war zone to serve in the logistical networks. Most important, the projects provided much needed excuses for local officials to justify the consumption of large amounts of war funds in their jurisdictions. Although some of the projects were partially funded through donations by officials and residents, as the records claim, other funds, most likely war funds, would also have been used.

HARDLY A SOLUTION

If the civil bureaucracy preyed on its subjects, in peacetime, to acquire extra income for its members' yamens and themselves, in wartime, it preyed on the state when huge amounts of funds allocated by the central government came its way. For military personnel, wars were optimal occasions to acquire booty from the state, as the dualistic structure of their income ensured. To be sure, there is other fraud that needs to be unearthed and more quantitative work to analyze the phenomena discussed above. Yet it is safe to conclude that a large portion, likely more than a half, of all war funds allocated was spent unnecessarily or illicitly, or embezzled by officials, both military and civil and at the different levels. In his edict rendering the death penalty to Hu Qilun, Jiaqing clearly stated the commanders' rationale for not finishing the war in a timely manner:

> Commanders such as Mingliang and Yongbao have procrastinated while battling the bandits, showing no interest in bringing an end to the campaign. They know that they will be awarded a maximum of only one of the five noble ranks with fixed stipends, when they successfully conclude the campaign. That is no comparison to enjoying handsome bribes, in the thousands or tens of thousands of taels, when they lead their troops and pass through local areas. So they are enticed to keep the bandits alive in order to enrich themselves and waste state funds to line their own pockets. That is the reason the bandits have spread near and far and have not been wiped out in so long a time.[253]

Although the failure of the Qing state in administering the finances in this campaign can hardly be in doubt, it should be pointed out that it was indeed an extremely difficult task to close loopholes as soon as

they appeared, given the structure of the wartime logistical system and the scope and complexity of the operations. Unlike most previous wars in the eighteenth century, this war was conducted against rebels in numerous groups in central China, who pursued guerrilla warfare for most of the long conflict. When pursuing the rebels from one province to another, the forces were entitled to receive funds and other logistical support from the logistical services of other provinces. Thus, the armies had the opportunity to double claim their stipends, subsidies, and awards from both their home province and the province they fought in. As battlefields were interspersed among local communities, rather than being on frontiers or in foreign lands, local society was engaged on a scale unseen since the Wu Sangui Rebellion at the end of the seventeenth century. As prefects and magistrates in the war zone aggressively maximized their gains, there was no mechanism for the logistical staff to verify their applications for funds. The same can also be said about the requests from logistical commissioners and grain stations. When the amounts of funds applied for were too huge to be reasonable, all the logistical staff could do was cut back a bit before issuing the funds. Consequently, applicants requested bigger amounts in case they were trimmed.[254]

In the spring of 1799, Hengšui admitted that the distribution of funds from the logistical bureaus to departments and counties was problematic:

> When the rebellion started, the military forces were hastily deployed, and all logistical matters were dealt with in a rushed manner. Therefore, it is not possible to issue funds according to the regulations for every claim. [The funds are] distributed whenever requests are made; no rules have been set up. As a result, the amounts paid to hire draft animals and laborers, for the "salt and vegetable allowance," to hire militias, to relieve refugees, and to purchase grain for the troops varies from case to case. Sometimes war funds are first distributed from the logistical bureau in Xi'an to [those in] Hanzhong and Xing'an prefectures and then distributed to departments and counties. Sometimes the magistrates of departments and counties just go to the logistical bureau in Xi'an and receive the funds directly. The Xi'an bureau and the circuit and prefectural yamens [in Hanzhong and Xing'an] only know the total amounts that they have disbursed but cannot produce itemized accounts in a short time.[255]

By this time, more than 10 million taels of silver had been allocated to Shaanxi. However, as Hengšui reported, there was no proper bookkeeping. Deeming it difficult work to examine all the past accounts, he asked the emperor to send high-ranking officials to Hanzhong to clean up the accounts and set up regulations. Shocked to hear this, Jiaqing was also relieved because Songyun was heading to Shaanxi.[256] Nearly a year after he arrived, Songyun laid out some

logistical rules for the Shaanxi theater, which were followed in some places.[257] However, the rules were apparently neglected after Songyun's departure shortly afterward. Near the end of the campaign, it was again revealed that Shaanxi did not have proper bookkeeping to account for the spending of nearly 30 million taels.[258] In mid-1801, when Wu Xiongguang took up the position of governor-general of Huguang, he found that the situation described by Hengšui also existed in Hubei; there were no precise rules to follow when it came to disbursing war funds, with several logistical bureaus, including the one in Wuchang, overlapping each other in issuing funds to the armies and the magistrates. After he had examined the accounts in the logistical bureau at Xiangyang, Wu found, to his surprise, that there were records on how much money had been allocated to various parties, but there was no record at all of how the money had been spent.[259]

The logistical staff, including the directors, was at a total loss in overseeing the departments and counties spending the war funds. In late 1798, Funing admitted that abuses had been widespread. However, he did not think that it was feasible to sort out all the cases of fraud before the end of the campaign, when all the account books would be submitted by the logistical commissioners and local officials for auditing.[260] Jiaqing also knew that the key to either covering up or exposing the loopholes and fraud lay in the account books: "Financial fraud in the military has always come into being as the result of mixing up expenditures and delaying [submitting the accounts for auditing]. Plus, when one item cannot be approved, it is mingled with other items. Therefore, everything is tangled up, easy for fraud to be wrought."[261]

To Jiaqing as well, the last resort seemed to be the audit that usually started after a war ended. From its early years, the Qing dynasty had set up a multifaceted auditing system, the so-called reporting on expenses (*zouxiao*) for both routine expenditures and ad hoc ones such as the costs of wars and water projects.[262] In auditing war expenditures, the expenses were cataloged according to type, such as allowances paid to the troops, rewards to the troops, pay to the militias, transportation costs, cost of ammunition and equipment, and so on. There were multiple claims, or *an* (cases)—as many as scores or even more than one hundred, defined by locale and time—under each of the categories. When claims were submitted to the Ministry of Revenue, they were screened by officials and clerks against the rules. If an expenditure was deemed to be in accordance with the rules, the amount of the expense was deducted from the funds allocated and the claim was approved. If expenses were in violation of the rules, they were returned to the senders to be reworked. Although the system

served as a safety valve for the state's fiscal health, there were ways to outmaneuver it. The most common practice was for officials who had submitted claims to buy off the auditing officials with bribes.[263] The auditing officials were only responsible for checking whether expenses were sanctioned by statute; they could not possibly know how much money had indeed been paid in a given case. For example, the auditing officials would approve a claim that a certain amount of money had been spent to repair a bridge to facilitate the passage of the troops if the cost was right for a bridge of a certain length and width. But they did not require any proof to support whether this sum was indeed the real cost in repairing the bridge or whether the bridge was indeed repaired.

Therefore, as long as the spenders could work out legitimate uses of funds, the audit would hardly do the perpetrators of war-front corruption any harm. However, finding or fabricating excuses took time, which might well have been the reason the war could not end any sooner. The longer a campaign lasted, the more time the culprits of misappropriation would have to cook the account books or scramble for justifications. As Jiaqing pointed out in the autumn of 1799:

> Let's think about this: there are only a certain amount of reserves in the dynasty's treasury. By now you people have squandered 70 million taels of state funds, while not giving priority to military operations. Then how can the bandits be suppressed? You people's intention is no more than to try to make up for the holes [in your accounts] made earlier in the war by repeatedly asking for more funds and fabricating expenditures. Therefore, you have been procrastinating, unwilling to wrap up the campaign, for you fear that all the fraud will be exposed, and you will have no way to pay back [all the money] once the war is finished.[264]

In early 1801, emboldened by the substantial dwindling of the number of rebels in all the theaters, the emperor was ready to take action again on the fiscal front. On New Year's Day, Jiaqing issued an edict ordering a start to the auditing of expenditures in the first three years of the campaign, because more time would make it increasingly difficult to sort out the accounts, given their enormous scale and the complexity of the expenditures. He figured that there would be no barrier to exposing the fraud from those years, since almost all the officials in charge of logistics in that period had been either dismissed or punished. However, he ruled that the misspent and misappropriated money was to be paid back by the responsible parties.[265] Because in the past auditing was rarely conducted before a war ended, this was an unusual act. Apparently, Jiaqing was eager to reclaim some money from the culprits of war-front corruption,

although he did not wish to hold anyone accountable politically or legally.

This ordinance was met with tacit resistance in the battleground provinces. There were only infrequent submittals in 1801 and 1802 in the wake of Jiaqing's somber directive. Among the small number of cases submitted by Lebao in these years, most were from either the second Gurkha war or the Miao campaign; only a few cases were from the White Lotus War, and they were all from early 1796, when Sun Shiyi acted as Sichuan's governor-general. Unquestionably, the shrewd Lebao tried to avoid the more turbid and problematic years as long as possible. Meanwhile, Shaanxi submitted only ten cases in one and a half years after Jiaqing's audit order. Upset, the emperor reprimanded Shaanxi for its snaillike response in the late summer of 1802, insisting that Shaanxi submit all cases within two months.[266] Again, the demand was not realized, although it propelled Shaanxi to submit more cases in the months to come. Not until after victory was declared for the last time in late 1804 did large numbers of claims from all the battleground provinces stream in.[267] The conspicuously slow response to Jiaqing's call footnoted his statement cited above that finding the time to figure out ways to survive the audits was indeed a factor in the protraction of the campaign. The battles over the account books long outlived the war. Although, as a result of the audit, many officials who had served in the war were obliged to pay back misspent or misappropriated war funds, some black holes remained undisclosed forever.[268] By 1814, ten years after the war ended, more than 5 million taels spent in the first three years of the war in Shaanxi had not been accounted for, and more than 2.5 million taels spent in Hubei, Sichuan, and the provinces that had sent "assistance funds" had not been cleared.[269] In other words, delay tactics could serve the war profiteers as well in the audit as in the war itself.

CONCLUSION

> It is not a great matter that the funds in the state treasury have been exhausted.... Although as much as 100 million [taels] in war funds has been allocated, they will have gone no farther than among the people, so that it should not be hugely regrettable.
>
> —THE JIAQING EMPEROR, 1800

FOR about a decade, the Qing dynasty was at war. Although the enormous spending to support this permanently crippled the dynasty's fiscal sustainability, the enemy was not dangerous enough to justify the cost. As claimed by the campaign leadership in the first triumph memorial, about two hundred thousand "bandits" had been killed. By the time of the second victory in the summer of 1803, another two thousand had been eliminated. The last phase of the conflict, between then and mid-1805, added another several hundred more insurgents and other "bandits," most likely former militiamen, to the total.[1] A great portion of those killed undoubtedly were coerced civilians.

The Qing casualties were relatively light. Although not giving a grand total of the casualties of Qing regulars and hired militias, the Qing records indicate that about 420 officers were killed in the campaign, including the two provincial military commanders Wang Wenxiong and Mukedengbu, and the Manchu aristocrats Huilun and Anlu.[2] In fact, ranking officials who died of natural causes outnumber those who died in battle.[3] Knowing clearly that it was not a glorious war, Jiaqing and his administration downplayed the final victory in late 1804. Other than compiling the official chronicle and letting the local governments set up "shrines to manifest loyalty" to memorialize the war dead,[4] the state did not illustriously commemorate the campaign. Having composed numerous poems during the campaign for every "victory" as well as nearly every twist and turn, Jiaqing seldom looked back at the event during the rest of his reign.

To a degree, the state's reluctance to pursue draconian measures toward sectarian societies both during and after the conflict was

indicative of its appraisal of the rebellion. The state viewed the events as local unrest instigated by several sectarian teachers whose followers were rabble. Realizing that it was impossible to root out sectarian networks in society, the Jiaqing administration took a realistic approach. Jiaqing reiterated his decision to tolerate law-abiding sectarian societies several times. When learning from the captured Wang Tingzhao that there were many sectarians in Henan and Hubei, Jiaqing once again warned the two provinces not to take any action against peaceful sectarians and to punish only those conducting subversive activities. To underscore his position, he enclosed his treatise "On Heretical Teachings."[5] Even after the Eight Trigram uprising shook the capital and hit the Forbidden City in 1813, Jiaqing did not alter this position, although he painstakingly upgraded the security of the capital.[6]

Factors that influence the trajectories and consequences of any rebellion can be sought from both sides of the conflict. Although the capability of an uprising's organizers always matters, the suppressor's efficacy is also an important determinant. Ultimately, how much damage any uprising can cause hinges mainly on how fast the state can mobilize its military forces and then how effectively those forces can perform in quelling the revolt. The fact that the White Lotus uprisings, which were poorly organized, could not be put down for so long serves to corroborate the presumption that the Qing military had lost its vitality, as first suggested by Inaba in 1914. This study has shown, however, that the Qing military was efficient in 1796 and early 1797, stifling the uprisings in their early stage and eradicating entire insurgent groups in a matter of days or weeks. The Qing military's superiority in manpower, weaponry, and financial support determined that the conflict was always asymmetrical. Even in the latter part of the war, commanders could easily finish off their enemy in many battles when there was a reason for them to do so. In 1813 and 1814, when another uprising erupted in southern Shaanxi in response to economic stress, the Qing forces led by Cangling and Yang Yuchun exterminated all several thousand rebels in a mere two months, despite the difficult terrain in the Qinling Mountains, which had been one of the excuses frequently cited to justify the delays in the White Lotus War.[7] When its commanders were motivated to fulfill their duty, the Qing military could still be useful. Nevertheless, its flawed military financial system created a great dilemma: military personnel who were grudgingly compensated in peacetime looked to augment their fortunes when deployed to war. In the White Lotus War, the commanders, even the more conscientious ones, were not shy about taking advantage of the opportunity, and the rampant war-front corruption played a large role in obstructing the campaign from

reaching a timely end, while nullifying the state's effort since the late Qianlong period to restrain the military from excessively profiteering from war funds.

The phenomenon of having massive numbers of "expeditionary militiamen" fight in the place of troops in the White Lotus War exposed another serious problem in the Qing military system, in addition to wartime corruption. With a virtual military household system in place for both the Manchu banners and the Green Standard Army, in which rank-and-file vacancies were often filled by soldiers' offspring and relatives, qualified or not and sometimes through bribery, able young men in society had little chance to join the military. Despite the attention paid by the state to ensuring the economic well-being of its soldiers, the ever-increasing burden on the soldiers of supporting their entire families was counterproductive to the Qing efforts, inevitably leading to impoverishment of the soldiers, both bannermen and Green Standard. During the White Lotus War, the fact that so many able-bodied men were willing to be hired for years as militiamen and many of them outperformed the regulars proved that there was a large pool of qualified candidates for professional soldiers in society.

In a sense, the expeditionary militiamen were embryonic professional soldiers. They were recruited from society and sent back to society. While they were hired, they were paid by the state, but the state was not obliged to feed their families. When they were demobilized, their relationship with the state was terminated after they received their send-away subsidies. In fact, the increased use of ethnic soldiers in the late eighteenth century had been a harbinger of change. The absorption of the militias into the Green Standard Army, first in the Miao campaign and then in the White Lotus War, amounted to a significant step in the reform of the Qing military system.[8] However, enlisting the last militiamen as merely intern soldiers at the end of the White Lotus War sowed the seeds of the trouble. Faced with discrimination and mistreatment by their superiors, some of those militiamen-cum-soldiers rioted in 1806 and 1807. The experiment was thus upended, for the three mutinies confirmed to the state its constant concern that those unruly men were innately dangerous. In late 1807, when some of the ethnic communities in southwestern Sichuan revolted, Jiaqing instructed Lebao, who remained Sichuan's governor-general, to strictly follow the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* for all expenditures required in suppressing it, thus denying him the chance to reuse the militia scheme, even though the circumstances were not dissimilar to those in the Miao campaign.[9] When battling the Eight Trigram uprising, Jiaqing resolutely rejected the suggestion of hiring militias, citing the

lesson he had learned from the White Lotus War.[10]

Jiaqing's decision to terminate hiring and using militias in wars was a mixed blessing. On the one hand, it was wise, as the scheme was indeed "an expensive and dangerous expedient," as Kuhn has pointed out and this study has demonstrated.[11] On the other hand, the distrust of people outside of military households, which ran deeper after the three mutinies, served as a psychological hindrance against recruiting new blood from society for military service, dooming the prospect of dismantling the military household system. In retrospect, Jiaqing regretted bitterly that he had not relied more on regulars in the White Lotus campaign. In 1804, he revisited Yimian's 1797 proposal to increase the size of the Green Standard Army by recruiting thirty thousand reserve soldiers. As he commended Yimian for the proposal, which would have helped limit the use of militias, and praised the Qianlong emperor for his instruction to fill those positions with selected militiamen, Jiaqing faulted the viceroys in the battleground provinces for not having enforced the measure. Yet, seven years after the proposal, he still lamented the fact that he had not found a solution to settling the last militias, given that many of them resisted joining the army.[12] Of the two reasons given by militiamen for refusing to become regulars—the pay was low and the regulars were subject to discipline—the compensation was key. Hypothetically, a raise in the stipends of the Green Standard soldiers could have lured the militiamen to the army. And this step could have triggered a revamping of the Qing military system.

Nevertheless, the state's dire fiscal situation in the late stages of the campaign hampered any endeavor that entailed an increase in spending. When the rebellion started in 1796, the central government's treasury was full, and the Qianlong emperor was more than willing to pay for the operations. However, the unchecked spending in the battleground provinces, the lion's share in the name of hiring militias and "long-term mules," soon drained the silver reserves in the treasury to a historic low. When Jiaqing took over in early 1799, he had to direct a great deal of attention to reducing spending and increasing income. Nevertheless, even if Qing fiscal conditions had permitted an increase in the regulars' income, the structural constraints were formidable. In the autumn of 1802, Wu Xiongguang suggested raising the pay of the healthy and strong Green Standard soldiers by depriving injured and sick soldiers of compensation and sending them back to their home provinces.[13] But Jiaqing firmly ruled it out: "It would create extra pay on top of the regulated stipend if the stipends of the invalid soldiers who have been sent back to their home garrisons were seized to add to the stipends [of the healthy ones]. How could the rate then be reduced to the original level in the

future?”[14]

It was true that any change to the income of the regulars would trigger a chain reaction. As an increase of soldiers’ pay was long overdue, it would be difficult to take away, without an uproar or worse, any ad hoc wartime increase when the campaign ended. If the state allowed those troops to keep the increase, the pressing question would be whether Green Standard troops that had not been deployed to the campaign should be granted an increase as well. If there were an across-the-board increase in pay to the Green Standard troops, the state would have felt obliged to update the pay of the bannermen, whose financial predicament had long been a headache for the throne. The repercussions of revamping the system to compensate the armies, which had been in place since the early years of the dynasty, would have been too overwhelming for the Jiaqing administration to handle. Given Jiaqing’s indecisive personality and the unadventurous mindset of his major advisors, it is no surprise that a safer solution was adopted; the emperor simply paid lip service to exhorting all the military officials to pay more attention to the training and well-being of their troops, making sure that they could be relied on once they were needed to battle a new enemy. Of course, few would heed his instruction.

In the White Lotus War, almost all top commanders and most provincial governors-general and governors were bannermen. Among those bannermen, most were Manchus, including Yongbao, Ohūi, Funing, Hengšui, Mingliang, Eldemboo, Ingšan, Jing’an, Lebao, Kuilun, Nayancheng, Wesibu, Changlin, and Šulin; some were Mongols such as Huiling, Delengtai, Songyun, Taibu, and Cangling; and only Sun Shiyi and Qingcheng were Chinese bannermen. Arguably, this was the last war in which bannermen were predominant in the leadership. The bannermen were roughly aligned in two schools. Hengšui, Mingliang, and Cangling represented the old guard of the Manchu tradition that emphasized cavalry warfare and archery. On the battlefield, they always led the fight themselves. Moreover, Mingliang showed his distrust and disdain for both the Green Standard Army and the militias. When he made use of militiamen, he used them as decoys or prey to lure the insurgents into his ambush range but did not value them as combatants. On the contrary, many other bannermen, typically Lebao, Eldemboo, and Delengtai, preferred to patronize outstanding junior generals, many among them Chinese, and delegated the fighting to them, even though they were condescending toward the latter.

After he moved to Shaanxi at the beginning of 1800, Eldemboo seldom went into battle himself but relied on Yang Yuchun and Mukedengbu in the operations. When Yang and Mukedengbu were

away leading their own independent detachments, Eldemboo turned to the two Jinchuan orphans, Zhaketaer and Sangjisitaer, who had always been in his retinue, and another Chinese officer, Yang Fang, whenever there was a battle. Not a warrior himself, Lebao might have initiated this practice to patronize and take advantage of Chinese officers. In the Miao campaign, Lebao had relied on two Chinese officers, Shi Jin and Ma Yu (the great grandson of Ma Liangzhu, a famed Green Standard general during the Kangxi period). After Shi was killed in 1800 and Ma Yu was sent to Delengtai, Lebao patronized and relied on another outstanding Chinese officer, Xue Dalie.[15] In the campaign's last phase, Lebao also made substantial use of Gui Han and Luo Siju, two former militiamen who had become Green Standard officers. Although he had fought many battles himself earlier in the campaign, Delengtai mainly used Ma Yu and Saicungga, a banner officer, to bear the brunt of the fighting during the campaign's long finale.[16] Despite their instrumental roles in the action, the Chinese officers did not always receive the credit and rewards they deserved. The banner commanders were not inclined to report their contributions to the throne but always listed numerous bannermen's names when asking for promotions and rewards following a battle. Only in the late phase of the campaign was Yang Yuchun promoted to the position of provincial military commander.[17] Although Yang's rise to the top rung of the Green Standard hierarchy (he later became governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu) signals the increasing importance of Chinese personnel in the military system, it did not spark a formal realignment in the bannermen-Chinese relationship.

The White Lotus War presented an opportunity for the Qing dynasty to reform its military. However, the Jiaqing administration would opt to stay with irregulars to tackle the insurgents for the time being and to maintain the status quo in its armies in the long term. In the immediate wake of the campaign, some fence-mending measures were taken to secure the triborder area, such as adding new garrisons and instituting new patrols and joint exercises in the area. However, those measures were soon compromised. The patrols were canceled in 1805 because of their high expense.[18] Then, after the three mutinies, many former militiamen were purged, their vacancies eliminated, and some new garrisons downgraded.[19] Although the total size of the Green Standard Army was increased by several dozen thousands during the war owing to the recruitment of new soldiers in the 1790s, those increases soon evaporated.[20] In 1814, chiefly because of fiscal constraints, the Qing state decided to reduce the size of the Green Standard Army to its level of the early Qianlong period, although the reductions would not be completed until several decades later in the mid-nineteenth century. Those reductions coupled with the continued

practice of keeping many vacancies unreported and thus unfilled left the Green Standard Army at its smallest size and poorest form when it was faced with unprecedented foreign and domestic crises at that time.[21]

Economically, the war left a long-lasting impact on the battleground provinces and the empire at large. For years, war funds in silver ingots had been sent to the logistical headquarters in the battleground provinces—Hanzhong, Xiangyang, Dazhou, and Baoning—in addition to the provincial capitals in Wuchang, Xi'an, and Chengdu. Whether the total allocation of funds was 120 million or 91.7 million taels, the volume of the flow of silver was unprecedentedly hefty. When the silver ingots were delivered at their destinations, there were two channels by which they could disperse and disappear: they were either spent or embezzled. Since a considerable portion of the total allocations was spent locally, they should have been beneficial to the local economy.[22] In fact, this is what the Jiaqing emperor had chosen to believe. The supposition that the money might have ended up enriching the local populace gave Jiaqing some solace as he expressed, dutifully, a good Confucian monarch's concern for the people's suffering: "It is not a great matter that the funds in the state treasury have been exhausted.… Although as much as 100 million [taels] in war funds has been allocated, they will have gone no farther than among the people, so that it should not be hugely regrettable. It is the thought of all the places in the [battleground] provinces that have been burned and looted, with numberless lives lost, that brings me endless uneasiness."[23]

Indeed, a great quantity of war funds had gone into society. Money had been paid to militiamen, military laborers, and the owners of draft animals, despite numerous instances of fraud and misappropriation. Since many of the hundreds of thousands of militiamen and laborers came from the bottom of the social echelon, having little or no property or reliable livelihoods, some having been bandits already, the wartime employment helped alleviate an increasingly acute social problem of an expanding group of homeless and jobless drifters, even if only for the time being. As Songyun observed at the beginning of 1800, the poor in the mountainous Han River valley in southern Shaanxi had been hired to build forts, dig moats, and transport supplies or been recruited as militiamen to guard cities or checkpoints. Being mindful of social issues, Songyun recognized that the campaign had helped this segment of the population to gain livelihoods, despite the disturbance of normal life by the conflict.[24] Lebao also mentioned at the end of 1800 that the homeless and jobless had gained livelihoods by serving as either military laborers or militiamen.[25] However, it is another question

whether wartime employment helped the destitute to change their lives long term—by obtaining a piece of land or launching a small business, for example. Evidently, some of them had a hard time readapting to civilian life when demobilized, as hundreds, perhaps thousands, of discharged militiamen and military laborers joined the rebels or became bandits. In Sichuan, in the postwar period, many of those people resorted to banditry or salt smuggling for living, becoming a continuous challenge to the social order.[26]

The war funds were also spent to procure supplies both inside and outside the war zone. It is almost certain that the purchase of various goods in large quantities stimulated the local economy. In the spring of 1799, Lebao bought more than ten thousand pairs of shoes at one time in Taiping and Daning for Delengtai's army, a considerably large transaction in the two sparsely populated places.[27] Besides the wholesale procurements made by the logistical staff, troops, militiamen, laborers, mule drivers, and other personnel with the armies had to purchase both foodstuffs and other supplies from local markets or local residents when the logistical corps could not keep up with the armies. As in the wars during the Qianlong era, the massive consumption by the military forces also had side effects. At first, as most retail transactions in the local areas were conducted with copper coins and the troops and militiamen had to exchange silver for coins at local markets, shortages of copper coins occurred from time to time, which led to the devaluation of silver. In 1800, 1 tael of silver was worth only 700 to 800 copper coins in southern Shaanxi. In order to satisfy the needs of the military forces, more coins were cast and distributed in the battlefield provinces.[28] The more serious repercussion of the suddenly increased consumption of foodstuffs and other goods was inflation. In areas that had been frequented by both sides, prices, especially food prices, rose steeply. In southern Shaanxi, where supplies were extremely scarce, the inflation became most acute.[29] Drastic inflation also occurred in the prices of horses, mules, and other draft animals, which were in constant shortage in the war zone. The wide gaps between supply and demand provided an optimal environment for speculative businessmen.

Largely absent in the extant records and thus obscure is the role played by merchants. However, traces in the records suggest that they were active in trading with the armies, catering to generals and logistical officials, and taking advantage of other opportunities created by the war.[30] Although commerce in the war zone was initially hit hard by the hostilities, as merchants from outside hesitated to get in harm's way, the enormous amount of funds delivered to the front would undoubtedly have attracted those who were more venturesome. Moreover, the hostilities were limited in area, as the number of

insurgents was largely reduced by 1798, and most areas in the war zone were relatively safe. Gu Jiqi exposed how treasures and luxuries were abundant at the front, also corroborated by a court official who recounted that, while on an official trip to the front, he had been given three whole *hu* of pearls and ten thousand bolts of brocades as gifts by Shi Zuorui, the logistical boss of Dazhou, on top of being treated to banquets full of rare and expensive delicacies.[31] The demand for silks, jewels, delicacies, and other luxuries would have spurred merchants to trade with the military, local officials, as well as logistical personnel who all had cash on hand. Because of the conflict, the state monopoly of the salt produced in Sichuan had to be relaxed, which proved to be an opportunity for many. In fact, some businessmen who had been hurt by the war found redemption in the salt trade and made great fortunes.[32] In Sichuan, that most of the extravagant clubhouses of merchant associations, the so-called *huiguan*, were built during or after the Jiaqing period, provides an inkling of the emergence of many nouveaux riches in the wake of the White Lotus War.[33] In Shaanxi's Hanzhong and Xing'an prefectures, the long campaign—more precisely, the opportunities coming with the campaign—attracted many people from all walks of life to the region, driving up the population density.[34]

To be sure, not all the silver delivered to the war zone was spent locally. A large portion of the war funds was taken back to Beijing and Manchuria by officials and bannermen. Even some court officials who had eagerly gone to the war rushed home to purchase land or houses with ill-gotten money after brief service in the campaign, as Jiaqing pointed out. Carts full of goods and silver jammed the highways from central China to the capital, as Gu Jiqi described, returning the silver so laboriously transported to the front. In fact, economic historians have suggested that the long-lasting campaign might have played a role in inspiring the credit business. Given that normal transportation routes were often interrupted by the hostilities and it was not safe to carry cash around, some merchants, especially those of Shanxi, were forced to develop a credit system for money transfer.[35] It is likely that a portion of the embezzled war funds were sent back to Beijing in this manner later in the campaign.

Qing law ruled that officials who embezzled more than 1,000 taels of silver be given the death penalty. Nevertheless, Jiaqing willingly brushed this rule aside, even when many generals openly spent their illicit gains under his nose in the capital city and when some of those officials were arrested and accused of corruption. Once the campaign ended, the emperor was no longer motivated to bring anyone who had been suspected of stealing war funds to justice; no search of homes was ordered and no investigation carried out.[36] Before the end of

1805, Eldemboo passed away, most likely because of the heart problem he had suffered from for years. In 1809, Delengtai also died of illness. Of the triumvirate, only Lebao lived for another fifteen years after the war. Despite the rumors that he continued embezzling public funds in Sichuan, Lebao remained Sichuan's governor-general until 1810.[37] Before he died in 1819, Lebao served in several key positions in the central government and was a grand councilor.[38] He was never investigated again. It remains unknown how much money he obtained illicitly from the Miao campaign and the White Lotus War and during his long tenure as Sichuan's governor-general. In death, Lebao was praised by the Jiaqing emperor as a loyal veteran viceroy and courtier, and his unpaid forfeits for unjustified spending in the White Lotus War as well as other campaigns were exempted. In the many biographies of Lebao compiled thereafter, he was credited with initiating the fortification project in Sichuan and it was considered one of the keys to the suppression of the rebels.[39] A villain was thus transformed into a hero.

If high-ranking military commanders and civil officials generally fared well in escaping severe punishment for their delays in action and stealing of war funds, the experience of lower-ranking civil officials and yamen clerks in the war was bittersweet. On the one hand, numerous prefects and magistrates gained awards and promotions for serving the armies or in logistical functions, developed rapport with war leaders who were often influential political figures, and appropriated war funds to close gaps in their yamen's budget, to line their own pockets, or both. Some also purchased higher offices using the money they made in the war. Expectant officials, who might have had to wait long years before receiving formal appointments, could fulfill their career goals more speedily by serving in the logistical services.[40] For the officials of Dazhou, the birthplace of the first uprising in Sichuan and the logistical headquarters of the Sichuan theater for years, a lasting benefit of the campaign was the upgrading of Dazhou subprefecture to Suiding prefecture at the end of 1801—Suiding meaning "pacification."[41] A measure to reinforce local control, it gave across-the-board promotions to all the officials there.

On the other hand, lower-ranking officials were more prone to be criticized or disciplined during the war. They were often obliged to recompense losses incurred in transporting supplies due to theft, bandits, or attacks by the rebels.[42] Military officials could either ask for "gifts" or "borrow" money from local officials whether on the logistical staff or not.[43] In the postwar audit, local officials were more subject to being ordered to close gaps in the bookkeeping by digging into their own pockets. Most important, they were sometimes used as scapegoats when corruption charges were filed, although they were

not always guilt-free. At the end of the campaign, Shi Zuorui, Lebao's right-hand man who had managed logistics for both Lebao and Delengtai, died suddenly.[44] He was subsequently accused by Lebao and others, conveniently, of having embezzled 500,000 taels silver of war funds. Ironically, Shi Zuorui did not leave a big fortune on his death, not even enough for a proper funeral.[45] The mysterious deaths of lower- to middle-ranking civil officials who served in the war—including Shi as well as Cao Xiangye and the two logistical officials at the Dazhou logistical bureau who died in 1799—highlight a dilemma; the campaign dramatically altered the dull routines of lower-ranking civil officials and a large number of people who parasitized the local government, giving them unusual opportunities to earn awards, positions, promotions, and fortunes, but it also exposed them to troubles and risks, some of them fatal.[46]

The prime loser was the central government of the Qing dynasty. First and foremost, the abundant silver reserves accumulated during the long Qianlong era greatly dwindled owing to the unprecedented spending in the Miao campaign and the White Lotus War. This loss was permanent and consequential, despite the Jiaqing emperor's claim that he had no regret as long as the money had gone to his people. During the rest of the Qing dynasty, the silver reserves in the central government's treasury never became close to the level of 70 million taels in the last years of the Qianlong reign. Therefore, the central government lost the capability to initiate and sponsor projects that did not fall into the purview of its routine expenditures, as has been convincingly argued by historians based on their macro studies of Qing fiscal history.[47] As demonstrated in this study, the depletion of the central coffers did not occur because of the magnitude of the rebellion. Rather, it was the joint work of all the parties in the suppressors' camp. Incapable of accurately assessing the financial needs of the campaign and tightly monitoring how the war funds were distributed and spent at the extremities of the logistical networks, the central government was at the mercy of the field commanders and viceroys at the front, who took full advantage of the war to prey blatantly on the central government. Not totally blind to the rampant corruption at the war front, Qianlong had no will or energy to battle it, instead counting on a quick victory to stop the draining of the money. Jiaqing, for his part, waged a spirited fight at first but gave it up not long after.

Beginning in late 1799, the Qing state struggled mightily for funds to support the lingering and expensive campaign, while maintaining its routine and emergent expenses in the capital and other parts of the empire. To save money, Jiaqing exercised self-restraint, suspending some superfluous projects such as palace renovation and the repair of

the imperial mausoleums.[48] He had to be tight-fisted even in his treatment of bannermen.[49] Aware of the dire financial situation of the central government, some provincial officials were reluctant to report the disasters in their jurisdictions and to request funds to cope with them.[50] To patch up the huge fiscal shortfalls, the Qing state had no choice but to go beyond the regular channels to raise funds. Although some measures had already been taken before Qianlong's death, it was after Jiaqing's takeover that the scramble for money went into high gear.

While trying to shift the burden of supporting the campaign to the provinces, demanding them to dig into their reserve funds (*fengzhuyin*) and send money to the war, the state adopted many measures to raise funds, including soliciting donations from merchants and selling the *jiansheng* title, as discussed in chapter 7. Perhaps owing to outcries from the provinces, early in 1800, Jiaqing allowed provinces to sell the *jiansheng* title to replenish their depleted coffers.[51] Although Jiaqing warned the provinces that the practice should be stopped once the reserves in their provinces returned to their normal level, it became difficult for the provinces to give it up. To share in its benefits, Jiaqing ruled, at the end of 1801, that the provinces send to Beijing their income from selling the title each time the amount reached 100,000 taels, which was also tantamount to acquiescing to the practice's continuation.[52] Another time-honored way to raise funds was selling offices. Having used it many times before, Qianlong drew on office selling again in 1798, using the pretext of supporting reconstruction in Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Hubei after the war.[53] Although Jiaqing halted it after Qianlong's death, deeming it morally unsound,[54] it was hard to place a brake on the sales of offices, given the voluminous silver coming into the treasury of the central government. In the late summer, 1799, Jiaqing made a compromise; he allowed people who had set out for Beijing to purchase offices before they heard of the news of the policy's cancellation to purchase offices on their arrival, a de facto reversal of his earlier ruling.[55] When it was finally called off in late 1801, this program had generated a total of more than 21 million taels for the central government.[56]

Meanwhile, the state turned to its own bureaucrats for money. It had set up new regulations by the middle of 1799 to collect arrears owed by officials, totaling more than 5.8 million taels.[57] Likely due to its slow progress, Jiaqing issued a decree in the autumn of 1800, urging some officials, by name, to pay off their outstanding debts in one year because the suppression campaign was nearing its end, and the state needed money badly for postwar reconstruction.[58] Jiaqing also imposed forfeits on officials who had been condemned for crimes or wrongdoings. Initiated by Hešen, this scheme, so-called redemption

silver (*yizuiyin*), had been one of the ways that Hešen and his superior, the Qianlong emperor, acquired wealth. Although Jiaqing officially discontinued it in the wake of Hešen's purge, he soon resumed it, albeit underhandedly. No longer using the term *yizuiyin*, Jiaqing solicited selected officials who had been condemned or punished to "redeem themselves by pledging money" (*chuzizishu*).[59]

Knowing that virtually all officials involved in the White Lotus War had the golden touch, Jiaqing targeted this group particularly, even though he did not hold them responsible politically or legally for their abuses and embezzlement of war funds. He first singled out Bi Yuan, who had been dead for some time, and ruled that his family must pay in full the forfeit of more than 20,000 taels Bi had not paid off.[60] At the beginning of 1800, in a more aggressive move, Jiaqing ordered that a portion of the "silver to nourish virtue" of the officials in Sichuan, Hubei, Shaanxi, and Henan, from governors-general and governors to circuit attendants, be withheld to pay back some of the funds they had misspent in the name of compensating militias and military laborers, and that the dismissed officials in those provinces or their families "donate" some money for their redemption. Nevertheless, only Henan, headed by Wu Xiongguan, and Shaanxi, headed by Taibu, responded to this call actively.[61]

At the beginning of 1800, Jiaqing ordered the cases of Yongbao and Jing'an retried. Although the reason given was that new charges had been brought to light, it is likely that an unspoken motive was to exhort "donations." Just several months after a new sentence was declared, Yongbao was released from jail. It is not unlikely that Yongbao paid a forfeit for his release. But Jing'an, who had a cleaner record in financial matters, might not have had money to buy himself out. Therefore, he stayed in jail until 1803. Following his disgraceful fall in mid-1800, Nayancheng surrendered to the throne a mansion in Beijing's suburbs that had been granted by Qianlong to Agūi. It is likely that the surrender was ordered by Jiaqing.[62] The most interesting case is that of Yimian, who was dismissed and sent to Uliastai in early 1799. Not finding any excuse to prosecute him again, Jiaqing nudged him to donate some money in early 1800.[63] Not impressed with Yimian's pledge, Jiaqing kept pressing him to give more, even mentioning Lebao's pledge of 30,000 taels on his arrest in 1799. Either having no money to pay or unwilling to pay, Yimian requested instead to go to the front and serve in the military. Consequently, Yimian was dismissed from his position in Uliastai and exiled to Ili.[64]

In the rush for money, other possibilities had been proposed and mulled over. In the late spring of 1800, the head of the Imperial Household Department suggested auctioning the collections of

treasures procured since the founding of the dynasty, but this was not approved by Jiaqing.[65] In 1804, a Shanxi commoner proposed to increase levies on the rich, which was also rejected.[66] Some proposals were not accepted immediately but were adopted some years later, such as an increase in the price of salt.[67] Even in its desperate scramble for money, the Qing state did not increase land taxes directly or indirectly. As Jiaqing piously adhered to the sine qua non of "storing wealth among the people" (*cangfuyumin*), any tax hike was out of the question, even in the most difficult years from 1799 to 1801. Perhaps aware of the emperor's mindset, nobody in officialdom proposed it.

In his first years ruling the country, Jiaqing had to manage two campaigns at once, one to wrap up the lingering suppression war against the White Lotus rebels and the other to raise funds to achieve fiscal balance. The two campaigns were interlocking; the sooner the war ended, the better off the state's fiscal situation would be. Nevertheless, Jiaqing and his administration failed to end the war speedily, allowing the operations against a small number of rebel remnants to linger on for years. On the front to regain fiscal vitality, however, Jiaqing had a commendable record. By deflecting the brunt of the fiscal burden to support the campaign to the provinces and the private sector, the central government's treasury regained balance, though never abundance, in a few years. In the summer of 1801, the state had to fund an expensive project to repair the Yongding River after serious flooding in Beijing, which further reduced the silver reserves in the treasury to an all-time low of 16.9 million taels. After this year, the silver stockpile grew steadily until it reached a total of 24.5 million taels in 1805, signaling that the Qing state had emerged from the worst of the fiscal crisis when the suppression war was finally called off.[68]

The limited success in restoring the fiscal balance at the level of the central government in the short term laid to rest the urgency for the Qing to substantially revamp its method to fund wars and, more important, its fiscal structure.[69] Meanwhile, the end to the fiscal crisis put less pressure on Jiaqing to forcefully demand a quick ending of the war from the military commanders. In the rest of the Jiaqing period and the subsequent Daoguang period (1826–1850), the Qing state repeatedly made use of the contingency measures that it used during the White Lotus War to raise funds for emergent or special projects.[70] Meanwhile, the Jiaqing emperor resorted to the rhetoric of frugality, painstakingly featuring himself as uninterested in profit and extravagance.[71] The Daoguang emperor, his son and successor, took over this rhetoric and went even further in exhibiting his penchant for frugality. Unlike the Qianlong emperor, who had never been covert in

going after wealth and showing it off, both Jiaqing and Daoguang had to make restraining spending a priority. Universal tax remission, one of the hallmarks of the Qing golden age, never occurred again. Perhaps more critically, the Qing state largely compromised its policy to give financial priority to its armies, which had been followed from the early part of the dynasty. Even the naval forces battling pirates along the south and southeast coasts did not receive sufficient funds to upgrade their fleets—since the late Qianlong reign, they had sometimes rented merchant ships for naval operations because the latter were faster and better equipped with firearms than the aged, slow, and poorly equipped warships of the Qing navy.[72]

The tough times forced the embattled Jiaqing emperor to ponder the roots of the fiscal disaster. Not much more than a year into his rulership, Jiaqing became convinced that it might have been unwise for the central government to provide such generous financial support to the campaign against sectarian rebels, for they were annoying but petty local troubles, not worth drawing on the resources of the central government.[73] Indeed, the provinces all had their own garrison forces, which were funded through the military budgets of the provinces. If the garrison troops had done their job to annihilate the insurgents swiftly, the central government would not have had to pay for the campaign. For Jiaqing, this simple truth was learned the hard way. Nevertheless, his attempt to disown the campaign met with total failure. As described in chapter 4, after having allocated 400,000 taels from Beijing to Sichuan in the spring of 1800, Jiaqing told Lebao and Delengtai, the de jure bosses of the campaign in Sichuan, that they had to use Sichuan's funds to support the campaign thereafter.[74] However, he capitulated in a matter of a few days and resumed funding the campaign in Sichuan shortly after, owing to the constant pressure from Lebao and Delengtai.[75]

Having failed in wrestling with the battleground provinces regarding funding, the central government also failed to reclaim its leverage in its financial relationships with the provinces in the postwar era. More particularly, it was ineffective in acquiring resources from the provinces. In the postwar period, tax arrears and customs levy shortages became larger and more widespread, and it took longer for the provinces to pay them off, if they were not simply ignored.[76] For some provinces, this might have been a backlash to the exaction by the Jiaqing administration during the White Lotus War, especially in its last few years, when the coffers of the Ministry of Revenue did not disburse a single tael of silver to the war. In the provinces affected by the campaign, public granaries had remained empty long after the war ended, even though so much money had allegedly been spent to purchase grain to replenish them. The same

was true with the community granaries (*shecang*).[77] In fact, other provinces did not do much better in keeping their granaries full. The central government was also unsuccessful in collecting the forfeits imposed on many officials who had served in the war and had been accused of misspending or misappropriating war funds. By 1811, officials in Sichuan were still paying the forfeits they were obliged to pay from the Gurkha wars, let alone those for the White Lotus War.[78]

Meanwhile, the provinces became more assertive in their fiscal relationship with the central government. All the provinces that had in one way or another contributed to the campaign proactively demanded that the central government reimburse them for all the expenditures they had made in supporting the war, no matter how small.[79] More calculating provincial officials, such as Lebao, took more aggressive steps. In 1804, citing that Sichuan had used too much money from its provincial coffers for the campaign, Lebao requested that the central government grant some subsidies to Sichuan. A censor, Yan Tianpei, who had worked for the Sichuan division of the Ministry of Revenue, rebuked Lebao's claim, stating that he knew Sichuan's financial situation.[80] Indeed, it was absurd that Sichuan, which had received tens of millions taels during the campaign, came to complain about the shortage of funds.

What Beijing did not know then and for years afterward was that the Sichuan government had continued to levy a surcharge on its taxpayers in the name of supporting the campaign. In Sichuan, where the land taxes had been kept disproportionately low and the populace was relatively wealthy, the officials sometimes levied a surcharge, "subsidies collected from the local communities" (*minjian bangtie* or *limin jintie*), in emergencies such as war.[81] Although the levying of a surcharge may not have been limited to Sichuan, Sichuan was most notorious in doing so.[82] Aware of this practice in Sichuan and concerned that the magistrates and their runners could turn the occasion into a spree of extortion of taxpayers, Jiaqing cautioned Kuilun, at the beginning of 1800, not to impose the surcharge.[83] Several months after, the reinstated Lebao requested levying a surcharge in the name of awards to volunteer militiamen. Reluctantly endorsing it at first, Jiaqing soon changed his mind, telling Lebao to suspend the levy if the war funds in Sichuan were sufficient for the rest of the year.[84] But Lebao levied the surcharge anyway and mercilessly. In one month in early 1801, more than 154,000 taels were collected, which was nearly 25 percent of Sichuan's annual land taxes, 660,000 taels.[85] Then in 1802, Lebao collected the surcharge again.[86] To alleviate his discomfort at having added burdens on the taxpayers, Jiaqing granted tax remissions to the places affected by the levy both times, while warning Lebao not to do it again. Although he

had not made another request after 1802, Lebao continued levying the surcharge in Sichuan even after the campaigned ended. The central government had been kept in the dark for years.[87]

Clearly, fiscal decentralization had become a reality in the first decades of the nineteenth century, and it would reach the point of crisis when the Taiping Rebellion rocked the country in the 1850s. Ultimately, it indicated the weakening of the central government's grip on its provinces, a symptom of political decentralization. As this study strives to show, the central government's failure to command and discipline the war leadership pointed to a serious political crisis. The two emperors Qianlong and Jiaqing were aware of war-front corruption and self-serving behavior by their generals and local officials but did not have any effective means to rein them in, let alone root out widespread abuses. Although Jiaqing tried to enforce a war-front reform on his takeover in 1799, this venture was soon defeated by an entrenched war-front culture and vested interests. To placate the old guard, he sacrificed Kuilun, an earnest reformer and a stranger to war-front corruption.[88] In the remainder of the long campaign, the Jiaqing administration was completely powerless in enforcing a timetable for clearing up rebel remnants in the thousands and then in the hundreds. The emperor had to negotiate and even beseech for the completion of the action. The breakdown in the chain of command resulted in arguably the most debauched military campaign in Qing history.

In some European countries in the early modern era, warfare played a pivotal role in strengthening the state apparatus and enhancing its efficacy. Earlier in Qing times, when the dynasty had wrestled with the Zunghar Mongols, mobilization for wars on the far northwest frontier had forced the state to renovate and innovate its administrative, military, and logistical systems in order to prevail against the fierce Zunghar Mongols, who possessed certain advantages vis-à-vis the Qing.[89] Nevertheless, the White Lotus War proved to be an entirely different case. Given that the enemy, poorly organized and inadequately equipped, and without a clear political agenda or valid military strategy, had been nowhere near casting a serious challenge to the dynasty, the suppressors would have run no real danger by not fighting hard to eliminate them swiftly and instantaneously. In other words, the opportunity cost was extremely low. Therefore, a huge irony resulted; it was because of the weakness of the rebellion that it took many years for the Qing to extinguish it, for the priority of all the parties involved in the campaign, both military and civil personnel, was not extermination of the rebellion but maximizing personal gain. Worse than that, the Jiaqing administration demonstrated in the long campaign that it had neither the mettle nor the means to overhaul the

status quo once the war ended. The developments in the first decades of the nineteenth century—with the absence of any substantial reform, at least in the vital military and fiscal areas—do not support the perception that the Qing dynasty not only survived the White Lotus War but was revitalized by dealing with it.

APPENDIX

Allocations of War Funds, 1796–1804

Abbreviations

CMfoR Coffers of the Ministry of Revenue (Buku)
CMoR Coffers of the Ministry of Revenue (Neiku)
IHD Imperial Household Department treasury (Guangchusi)

DATE	AMOUNT (TAELS)	DESTINATION(S)	REQUESTER(S) OR GRANTER	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SOURCES
01/05/??	500,000	Hubei	Unclear	Anhui (source unclear)	*XFFL*, 5/21b
01/04/30	3,000,000	Henan and Hubei	Qianlong	State treasury (*neifang*)?	*XFFL*, 8/12b
01/??/??	2,000,000	Henan and Hubei	Unclear	Fei Bi Yuan and Wang Xin, 4 million had been allocated from the state treasury to Hubei and Henan before the tenth month	*XFFL*, 20/4a
01/10/19	2,000,000	Hubei	Bi Yuan, Wang Xin	State treasury	*XFFL*, 20/4a–b, 20/10b–11a
02/02/18	3,000,000	Hubei	Qianlong	CMOR	*XFFL*, 29/8b
02/05/04	3,000,000	Sichuan	Funing, Ingsan	300,000 from Sichuan's provincial treasury, 300,000 from Shaanxi, and 1,500,000 from Shanxi (taxes of 1777)	*XFFL*, 37/12b–14a
02/05/15	2,000,000	Shaanxi	Qin Cheng'en	CMOR	*XFFL*, 38/4b–6a
02/05/??	2,000,000	Hubei	Wang Xin?	ICMOR	*XFFL*, 39/45a
02/later06/12	4,000,000	Sichuan	Yimian, Funing	ICMOR	*XFFL*, 42/22a–23b; GZDJQ, 2680
02/07/27	1,000,000	Henan	Qianlong	ICMOR	*XFFL*, 45/22a–b
02/08/01	3,000,000	Hubei	Wang Xin	ICMOR	*XFFL*, 46/8a–9b; 46/13
02/09/27	2,000,000	Shaanxi	Qianlong	CMOR	*XFFL*, 51/28b
02/10/18	400,000	Gansu	Yimian	CMOR	*XFFL*, 53/38b; GZDJQ 328?
02/11/03	4,000,000	Sichuan	Qianlong	ICMOR	*XFFL*, 55/15b
03/02/03	2,000,000	Shaanxi	Qianlong	CMOR	*XFFL*, 63/8b
03/02/19	1,000,000	Hubei	Wang Xin	ICMOR	*XFFL*, 64/35a
03/05/27	4,000,000	Sichuan	Ingsan, Funing	ICMOR	*XFFL*, 68/25b–24a, 27b
03/05/25	3,000,000	Shaanxi	Qin Cheng'en (3,000,000 requested)	ICMOR	*XXFL*, 72/18a–19b
03/06/15	600,000	Gansu	Yimian	300,000 apiece from Shanxi and Henan land taxes?	*XFFL*, 73/39b–41a; GZDJQ, 1029
03/06/29	1,000,000	Hubei	Ing'an, Gaoki (1,500,000 requested)	CMOR	*XFFL*, 71/39b–42a
03/10/03	3,000,000	Sichuan	Lebao, Ingsan (4,000,000 requested)	CMOR	*XFFL*, 81/1a–2b, 81/5b
03/11/14	2,000,000	Shaanxi	Yimian, Qin Cheng'en (3,000,000 requested)	CMOR	*XFFL*, 83/24b–25b; 83/27a; GZDJQ, 4582
03/12/10	800,000	Henan	Wesibu	ICMOR	*XFFL*, 85/30b–31b

(*continued*)

DATE	AMOUNT (TAELS)	DESTINATION(S)	REQUESTER(S) OR GRANTER	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SOURCES
04/03/29	3,500,000	Sichuan	Funing; Jiaqing	CMOR	*XFFL*, 91/39a; *QSLJQ*, 59/38a
04/04/25	1,500,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	CMOR	*XFFL*, 87/10b
04/07/07	1,000,000	Gansu	Songyun	CMOR	*XFFL*, 109/7a–8a
04/07/11	1,000,000	Hubei	Wenshu	500,000 apiece from Anhui and Jiangxi (customs duties and from the provincial coffers if the former was not enough)	*XFFL*, 109/27a–28a; 109/29a–b
04/07/19	500,000	Sichuan	Lebao, Funing	Shaanxi (400,000 salt tax and the rest from land taxes)	*XFFL*, 110/28b–29b, 35a, 112/1a–2b
04/08/11	1,900,000	Sichuan and Shaanxi	Jiaqing	1,500,000 from CMOR stored in Shaanxi and 400,000 from DTD stored in Henan but for Sichuan and Hubei. On 04/09/25, 400,000 redirected to Shaanxi.	*XFFL*, 115/15b–16a, 123/16b–17a
04/08/17	500,000	Sichuan	Kunlun (2,600,000 requested)	CMOR	*XFFL*, 116/7a, 116/20b–21a
04/09/25	1,000,000	Shaanxi	Songyun (2,000,000 requested)	CMOR	*XFFL*, 123/8b–9b, 123/12a
04/10/09	3,000,000	Sichuan	Kunlun (several million requested)	Donations from Zhejiang and Liang-Huai merchants, Jiangxi's taxes due to Beijing (342,600 taels), and CMOR	*XFFL*, 126/31b–32b, 126/29b–30a, 146/35a
04/11/20	500,000	Henan	Jiaqing	CMOR	*XFFL*, 134/24b
04/11/26	800,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	CMOR. 1,000,000 were allocated, but 200,000 were later sent to Shaanxi on 04/12/13 (see below).	*XFFL*, 135/22b–23b
04/11/26	500,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	CMOR	*XFFL*, 135/22b–23b
04/12/01–02 (arrival time)	500,000	Shaanxi	Unclear	"Assistance funds" from Henan	*XFFL*, 138/5b
04/12/??	500,000	Shaanxi	Unclear	"Assistance funds" from Zhejiang	*XFFL*, 138/6a–b
04/12/13	200,000	Shaanxi	Songyun (1,000,000 requested)	From the 1,000,000 allocated to Sichuan (see above)	*XFFL*, 138/5b–6b, 138/11a–b
05/01/27	400,000	Hubei	Ch'eliki (800,000 requested)	CMOR	*XFFL*, 146/13b–16b.
05/01/??	1,000,000	Gansu	Jiaqing	800,000 from CMOR, 200,000 from DTD	*XFFL*, 149/40b; *JQSYD*, 5:18

(continued)

DATE	AMOUNT (TAELS)	DESTINATION(S)	REQUESTER(S) OR GRANTER	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SOURCES
05/02/09	1,300,000	Shaanxi, Sichuan, and Gansu	Jiaqing	From "assistance funds" on their way to Sichuan and Shaanxi; 300,000 to Hanzhong, 200,000 to Sichuan, 600,000 to Gansu 400,000 stored for both Sichuan and Shaanxi	*XFFL*, 149/40a–b
05/02/12	1,000,000	Sichuan and Shaanxi	Jiaqing	CMOR. Sent to Shaanxi's provincial treasury for Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu. On 05/03/04, 500,000 sent to Sichuan and 500,000 to Shaanxi.	*XFFL*, 150/23b–24a, 155/38a–b; *JQQJZ*, 5:69
05/03/30	500,000	Shaanxi	Taibu (2,000,000 requested)	CMOR	*XFFL*, 162/11b–14a, 161/22a
05/04/05	400,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	100,000 from IHD, 100,000 from the funds of Rehe, 200,000 from the funds sent to Beijing by Guangdong	*XFFL*, 164/23b; *JQSYD*, 5:158
05/04/05	120,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	Guangdong (surplus of the ship repair funds)	*JQSYD*, 5:158
05/inter04/01	500,000	Henan, Sichuan, and Hubei	Wu Xiongguang	From CMOR. First to Henan: then 180,000 to Hubei, 200,000 to Sichuan; Henan retained 200,000.	*XFFL*, 171/13b–15b, 171/17a–b, 185/2a–3a
05/inter04/01	500,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	300,000 from CMOR and 200,000 from IHD	*XFFL*, 171/17a–b
05/inter04/28	400,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	200,000 from CMOR and 200,000 from IHD	*XFFL*, 177/7b
05/05/17	500,000	Gansu	Jiaqing	300,000 from CMOR and 200,000 from IHD	*XFFL* 180/17b, 187/15a–b
05/06/12	150,000	Hubei	Wu Xiongguang	Henan's provincial coffers	*XFFL*, 189/25b–26a
05/06/23	500,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	Donations by merchants of Zhejiang	*XFFL* 187/15a–b
05/07/??	406,000	Shaanxi	Taibu	Taibu asked to count 406,000 "assistance funds" to Gansu that Songyun had retained as war funds for Shaanxi. Jiaqing endorsed it.	*XFFL*, 190/18b–19a, 190/20a–b
05/07/26	500,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	Customs duties from Guangdong	*JQSYD*, 5:373; *XFFL* 193/19b
05/07/26	250,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	Customs duties from Guangdong	*JQSYD*, 5:373, *XFFL*, 203/22a
05/07/29	500,000	Shaanxi	Taibu	Donations by merchants of Shanxi	*XFFL*, 194/16–17a.
05/08/16	700,000	Shaanxi	Taibu (1,500,000 requested)	Shanxi agreed to send 700,000 to Shaanxi	*XFFL* 204/12a–14a, 205/30b

(continued)

DATE	AMOUNT (TAELS)	DESTINATION(S)	REQUESTER(S) OR GRANTER	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SOURCES
05/08/23	400,000	Shaanxi and Sichuan	Jiaqing	100,000 from CMOR, 100,000 from LHD, and 200,000 from donations by Zhejiang merchants. Sent to Shanxi for further instructions. On 05/10/15, Jiaqing urged Shanxi to send 200,000 from Zhejiang to Sichuan	*XTTL*, 204/20b, 205/31a, 210/27b–28a
05/10/15	400,000	Sichuan	Unclear	CMOR, LHD	*XFFL*, 210/27b–28a
05/10/25	500,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	Shandong's and Jiangxi's emergency funds (*feigaihuyu*)	*XFFL*, 212/8b–9b
05/11/15	500,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	Guangdong (*jiansheng*-selling income, emergency funds, and surplus funds [*yingyu*]). Having allowed Hubei to retain 300,000 from this sum on 05/11/22, Jiaqing ordered Shanxi to send Shaanxi 200,000 from its treasury.	*XFFL*, 216/21a–b, 218/9a–b
05/11/22	200,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	Guangdong. See above.	
05/12/06	400,000	Hubei	Wesibu (800,000 requested)	200,000 apiece from *jiansheng*-selling income in Shandong and Jiangxi	*XTTL*, 221/12b–14b, 221/26b–27a
05/??/??	50,000	Hubei	Wesibu (?)	Borrowed from Henan	*XFFL*, 221/13a
05/12/22	300,000	Shaanxi	La Youren	Henan's provincial treasury	*XFFL*, 225/26b–27b, 225/31a–b
06/01/15	600,000	Shaanxi	La Youren	200,000 from Zhejiang's *jiansheng*-selling income, 200,000 from CMOR, and 200,000 from LHD. But Jiaqing ordered that Shaanxi could first retain 400,000 from "assistance funds" to Gansu (300,000 from Shanxi and 100,000 from Beijing).	*XFFL*, 238/31a–34b, 239/37a, 239/38b–36a, 240/17a–b
06/02/24	300,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	200,000 from Guangdong (merchant donations) and 100,000 from *jiansheng*-selling income in Hunan, which had been delivered to Beijing	*XFFL*, 239/16a–b
06/02/26	300,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	Guangdong (merchant donations)	*XFFL*, 240/18a–b
06/03/02	450,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	300,000 from Guangdong's treasury, including *jiansheng*-selling income, and 150,000 from *jiansheng*-selling income in Fujian	*XFFL*, 241/21a–b
06/04/06	200,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	Salt tax of Liang-Huai	*XFFL*, 248/20b–21a

(continued)

DATE	AMOUNT (TAELS)	DESTINATION(S)	REQUESTER(S) OR GRANTER	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SOURCES
06/04/22	200,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	Salt tax of Liang-Huai	*XTTL*, 251/31a–32b
06/05/13	300,000	Hubei	Wu Xiongguang	150,000 apiece from the provincial coffers of Shandong and Henan	*XTTL*, 255/31a–b
06/07/11	400,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	200,000 from Guangdong's surplus sent to Beijing and 200,000 from donations by Liang-Huai merchants	*XTTL*, 265/17b–18b
06/07/23	400,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	200,000 from Guangdong's surplus and 200,000 from donations by Liang-Huai merchants	*XTTL*, 266/39a–b
06/08/12	300,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	Jiangxi's provincial treasury	*XTTL*, 269/13a
06/08/28	400,000	Hubei	Wu Xiongguang (800,000 requested)	200,000 from Jiangxi's provincial treasury and200,000 from funds delivered to Beijing from Guangdong	*XTTL*, 272/1a–2a, 272/12a–b
06/08/29	200,000[?]	Shaanxi	Lu Yongxiang	From 1,300,000 in relief funds to Gansu from Shandong, Shanxi, and Henan	*XTTL*, 273/14b–15b,
6/09 or 6/10	200,000[?]	Shaanxi	Lu Yongxiang	Shaanxi was to retain 200,000 from the funds from Shanxi to Gansu	*XTTL*, 279/5a–b
06/10/12	300,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	Salt tax of Liang-Huai	*XTTL*, 279/7b, 282/16b
06/11/15	200,000	Shaanxi	Eldembee	Salt tax of Liang-Huai	*XTTL*, 284/22b–23b
06/11/15	200,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	Salt tax of Liang-Huai	*XTTL*, 284/21a–b, 23a–b
06/11/20	133,000	Shaanxi	Lu Yongxiang	From Guangdong's merchant donations on the way to Beijing	*XTTL*, 284/37b–38a
06/12/05	200,000	Shaanxi	Lu Yongxiang, Jiaqing	Donations by Liang-Huai merchants. They occurred after Shaanxi had retained 200,000 taels of "assistance funds" from Shandong to Gansu.	*XTTL*, 288/26b–28b
06/12/17	200,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	Donations by Liang-Huai merchants	*XTTL*, 290/23a–24a
07/01/11	100,000	Hunei	Jiaqing	Hunan's *jiansheng* selling income	*XTTL*, 294/29b–30a
07/01/12	150,000	Hunei	Wu Xiongguang	*Jiansheng* selling income. 50,000 from Hunan and 100,000 from Hubei	*XTTL*, 295/10a–b, 295/12b–13a
07/01/16	300,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	100,000 from Shanxi's *jiansheng* selling income, 100,000 donations by Liang-Huai merchants, and 100,000 donations by Changlu merchants.	*XTTL*, 295/29b–30a
07/01/17	100,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	Henan's *jiansheng* selling income	*XTTL*, 296/10b–11a
07/02/02	100,000	Hunei	Jiaqing	90,000 in *jiansheng* selling income from Anhui and 10,000 from other sources of Anhui	*XTTL*, 298/25b

(continued)

DATE	AMOUNT (TAELS)	DESTINATION(S)	REQUESTER(S) OR GRANTER	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SOURCES
07/02/10	3,000,000	Sichuan and Shaanxi	Yang Rui	500,000 apiece from Henan and Shandong, 1,000,000 from Shanxi. On 07/03/01, Jiaqing allowed Shaanxi to retain 400,000 from the 1,000,000 from Shanxi.	XFFL, 299/23b–26a; 299/28b–29a, 304/7b–8b
07/03/01	400,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	300,000 donations by Zhejiang merchants and 100,000 salt tax of Liang-Huai to make up the 400,000 taels intercepted by Shaanxi	XFFL, 304/7b–8b, 304/11b–11a
07/03/21	100,000	Shaanxi	Hualing	Donations by Zhejiang merchants (if less than 400,000, Jiaqing ordered to make it up with customs duties)	XFFL, 308/36b–29a
07/03/30	100,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	*Jianshang*-selling income from Jiangxi. Since only 89,000-some taels of this category in the provincial treasury, Jiaqing ordered to use other funds to make it 100,000.	XFFL, 309/26a
07/04/03	400,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	From Zhejiang (source not clear)	XFFL, 310/35b–36a
07/04/16	200,000	Shaanxi	Lu Youren	*Jianshang*-selling income and custom duties of Jiujiang that had been sent to and stored in Henan.	XFFL, 312/23b
07/04/21	500,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	100,000 from Hubei's provincial treasury, 200,000 from Jiangxi's land taxes, 200,000 from funds stored in Henan (customs duties from several custom houses in Zhejiang and Guangdong)	XFFL, 313/32a–33a
07/05/18	400,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	100,000 from Guangdong's custom duties that had been stored in Henan. 300,000 (customs duties and salt taxes) were ordered to be sent to Henan and then to Shaanxi.	XFFL, 317/10a–b
07/07/15	600,000	Shaanxi	Lu Youren, Jiaqing	Lu asked for 300,000 from Henan (sources unclear). Then Jiaqing told Henan to send to Shaanxi another 300,000 from the customs duties that had been stored in Henan and ordered 600,000 sent from Liang-Huai to Henan.	XFFL, 327/19a–20a
07/before 07	100,000	Hubei	Quanbao	From Hubei's provincial treasury to the logistical bureau in Xiangyang. 98,460 from *jianshang* selling income and the rest from Hubei's land taxes.	XFFL, 331/3a–b
07/08/02	500,000	Hubei	Wu Xiongguang, Quanbao	300,000 from Henan (of 600,000 from Liang-Huai to Henan, see 07/07/15 above), 200,000 from salt tax of Liang-Huai. Later Quanbao planned to have Henan send him 300,000 from Guangdong because the funds from Liang-Huai had not been sent out until 07/08/02.	XFFL, 331/3a–3b, 331/8a–b, 333/30a–31a

(continues)

DATE	AMOUNT (TAELS)	DESTINATION(S)	REQUESTER(S) OR GRANTER	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SOURCES
07/08/07	100,000	Hubei	Wu Xiongguang, Quanbao	*jiansheng*-selling income from Hunan	*XTFL*, 331/28b–29a, 331/31a–b
07/08/11	1,000,000	Shaanxi	Lu Youren	340,000 from funds stored in Henan, 260,000 from Zhejiang, 400,000 from Guangdong (200,000 merchant donations and 200,000 from the maritime customs)	*XTFL*, 332/1b–3b
07/10/19	500,000	Sichuan	Yang Kui	300,000 from salt tax of Liang Huai, 200,000 from Guangdong (customs duties)	*XTFL* 346/22b–25b
08/02/01	500,000	Shaanxi	Wu Xiongguang[a] (300,000–400,000 requested)	220,000 from the donations by Liang-Huai merchants and 280,000 from donations by Zhejiang merchants; first to Henan and then to Shaanxi	*XTFL*, 342/53b–56a, 342/58b–60a; *XTFLXB*, 4/1a
08/02/18	400,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	400,000 from funds stored in Henan. But Jiaqing mentioned on 08/03/11 that he had given Hubei 400,000 this year, which was confirmed by Wu Xiongguang.	*XTFLXB*, 5/8a, 8/35a–36a, 8/34b
08/inter02/18	700,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	Donations by Liang-Huai merchants	*XTFLXB*, 7/8b
08/05/29	550,000	Sichuan, Shaanxi	Jiaqing	300,000 to Sichuan and 250,000 to Shaanxi from donations by Liang Huai merchants that had been sent to Henan	*XTFLXB*, 8/35a–37a, 13/40b–41
08/06/05	200,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	Donations by Liang-Huai merchants. On the same day the sum was sent to Hubei, Jiaqing ordered customs in Fujian, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, etc., to send either 50,000 or 100,000 each to Henan	*XTFLXB*, 13/41a, 14/15a–b
09/01/08	1,000,000	Sichuan	Jiaqing	Customs duties from Guangdong	*XTFLXB*, 23/11b–15a
09/02/24	600,000	Shaanxi	Jiaqing	400,000 from donations by merchants in foreign trade and salt merchants in Guangdong, 200,000 from salt tax of Liang-Huai	*XTFLXB*, 24/29a–30b
09/04/26	200,000	Hubei	Jiaqing	100,000 apiece from *jiansheng*-selling income in Hunan and Hubei	*XTFLXB*, 26/38b–39a
09/06/11	600,000	Shaanxi	Ministry of Revenue per Jiaqing's order	500,000 in customs duties levied in Jiujiang, Longjiang, Huaian, Hushuguan, etc., and 100,000 from Shaanxi's provincial treasury	*XTFLXB*, 28/36b

[a] For this and the following two allocations only, the sources of the funds were listed as nothing, Jiaqing (even the context and the amount), Taksil (a man from the coffers of the central government, most likely, the[sic] in other letters.

[b] But Lu Youren later said that Shaanxi had received a total of 1,000,000 taels, including 300,000, from the "coastal areas [sic]" to Gansu. *XTFL*, 339/4b. Since the sum was returned to Gansu when Shaanxi received 500,000 from Guangdong in the eleventh month of 1607 (*XTFL*, 348/30b), it is not included in Tables 7.1 and 7.2.

[c] Shaanxi was supposed to return the amount to Gansu when the funds from Guangdong arrived, so it is not included in Tables 7.1 and 7.2.

[d] Initially for Eldembo in case he went to Hubei.

CHINESE CHARACTER GLOSSARY

Abbreviations

C: Chinese equivalent
M: Manchu equivalent

Adisi　阿迪斯
Agūi (C: Agui)　阿桂
Ahabao　阿哈保
Aixing'a　愛星阿
Akdun (C: Akedun)　阿克敦
an　案
anjiayin　安家銀
Ankang　安康
Anleping　安樂坪
Anling　安嶺
Anlu　安祿
Anyou Hall　安佑宮
Anyue　安岳

Badong　巴東
Bai Peixiang　白培相
Bai River　白河
Baihao　白號
Baihe　白河
Bailian　白蓮
Bailianjiao　白蓮教
Baimashi　白馬石
Baimianxia　白沔峽
Baitaba　白塔壩
Baiyanshan　白巖山
Baiyuzhai　白魚寨
Bamamiao　八馬廟
Bao Zhenghong　包正洪
Baocheng　褒城
Baofeng　寶豐

Baoji 寶鷄
Baojiadian 鮑家店
baojuan 寶卷
Baokang 保康
Baoning 保寧
Baoningzhai 保宁寨
baoxiao 報效
baozhai 堡寨
Bathang (C: Batang) 巴塘
baturu (C: *batulu*) 巴圖魯
Bayeshan 芭葉山
Bazhou 巴州
bazong 把總
beizhanbing 備戰兵
Besiyang (C: Baixiang) 百祥
Bi Buguan 畢不管
Bi Yuan 畢沅
Binzhou 邠州
Biyang 泌陽
bo 伯 (noble rank, earl)
Bo Sanpin 卜三聘
Bolin 伯麟
Boohing (C: Baoxing) 保興
Bozhou 亳州
bubo tangyin 部撥帑銀
Buku 部庫

Cabina (C: Chabina) 查弼納
cangfuyumin 藏富于民
canghua 蒼滑
Cangling (C: Changling) 長齡
Cangxi 蒼溪
canjiang 參將
canzan dachen 參贊大臣,
Cao Xiangye 曹庠業
Caobaiyu 草白峪
Caodian 草甸
Chang Dankui 常丹葵
changfu 長夫
Changheng 瑞亨
Changle 長樂
Changlin 長麟
changluo 長騾
Changming 常明
changpingcang 長平倉
changpingyin 長平銀
Changshou 長壽
Changyang 長陽
changyun 長運
Chaotianguan 朝天關
Chayuanxi 茶園溪
Chazhen 茶鎮
Chen Chaoguan 陳朝觀

Chen Chongde 陳崇德
Chen Dashun 陳達順
Chen Deben 陳德本
Chen Defeng 陳得俸
Chen Jinyu 陳金玉
Chen Lansen 陳蘭森
Chen Qiming 陳啓明
Chen Xianlun 陳先倫
Chen Yu 陳預
Cheng Xun 承勳
Chengde 成德
Chenggu 城固
Chengkou 城口
Chengshaodu 程梢渡
Chengxian 成縣
Chenjiahe 陳家河
Chenjiashan 陳家山
chennian chenyue chenri chenshi 辰年辰月辰日辰時
Chesenbao 車森保
chikonge 吃空額
chizi 赤子
Chongqing 重慶
Chongshizi 重石子
Chu 楚
Chuan 川
"Chuan Shaan Chu shanhou an" 川陝楚善後案
Chunning 春寧
Chuosijia 綽斯甲
Chusheng chengli 楚省成例
chuzizishu 出資自贖
Cui Tefeng 崔特峯
Cui Zonghe 崔宗和

Daba 大巴
dadanyin 打丹銀
Dadao River 大道河
Dahongshi 大紅石
Dai Ruhuang 戴如煌
Dai Shijie 戴世傑
Dai Si 戴四
Dai Xin 戴新
Daijiaying 戴家營
Daliangcheng 大梁城
Dalisi 大理寺
Dan Tao 但燾
Dangyang 當陽
Daning 大寧
Dashenshan 大神山
Dazhou 達州
Dazhu 大竹
Dazongxi 大棕溪
Dechun 德春
Deguang 德光

Delengtai　德楞泰
Dengfeng　登封
Dengzhou　鄧州
Deying'e　德英額
Dianjiang　墊江
dianshi　典史
Ding Hongdu　丁洪度
dingnan　丁男
Dingyuan　定遠
Dingzhu　定柱
Dong River　洞河
Donghu　東湖
Dongxiang　東鄉
dongzhi　冬至
dou　斗
Du Fu　杜甫
Du Maocai　杜茂材
duanpingyin　短平銀
dudu　都督
dusi　都司
dutong　都統

Ebilun (C: Ebilong)　遏必隆
Eldemboo (C: Eledengbao)　額勒登保
Enshi　恩施
Erlangba　二郎壩
erzhanggui　二掌櫃

Fabaoshan　法寶山
Fan Jichang　范繼昌
Fan Mingde　樊明德
Fan Renjie　樊人傑
Fan Xueming　樊學鳴
fanbing　番兵
Fancheng　樊城
Fang Guan　房琯
Fang Weidian　方維甸
Fangchaiguan　方柴關
fangka xiangyong　防卡鄉勇
Fangshanping　方山坪
fangshou xiangyong　防守鄉勇
Fangxian　房縣
fanluannian　反亂年
Fengcheng　豐城
Fengdu　豐都
Fenghuangzhai　鳳凰寨
Fengjie　奉節
Fengshen　豐紳
Fengshen'a　豐伸阿
Fengxian　鳳縣
Fengxiang　鳳翔
fengyin　封印
fengzhuyin　封貯銀

Foimo (C: Feimo)　費莫
Foning　佛宁
Fozhu　佛住
fu　福 (luck)
fu　撫 (conciliation)
Fu River　涪江
Fu Siyao　福死要
Fu Yueming　符曰明
Fuca (C: Fucha)　富察
Fuchang'an　福長安
Fucheng　富成
Fude　富德,
fudutong　副都統
fuduyushi　副都御史
Fugou　扶溝
fuguibushi　簠簋不飾
Fuheng　傅恆
fujia　夫價
Fujiahe　傅家河
fujiang　福將 (general of luck)
fujiang　副將 (regional vice military commander)
Fuk'anggan (C: Fukang'an)　福康安
fumajia　夫馬價
Funing　福寧
Fuqiang　伏羌
Furdan (C: Fuerdan)　傅爾丹
Fuyang　阜陽

Gan'gou　乾溝
ganjie　甘結
Gao Chengjie　高成傑
Gao Er　高二
Gao Jianqi　高見奇
Gao Junde　高均德
Gao San　高三
Gao Tiande　高天得
Gao Tiansheng　高天昇
Gaobadian　高壩店
Gaojiaying　高家營
G'aoki (C. Gaoqi)　高杞
Gaoyuanchang　高院場
Gebushe　格布舍
Gelao　仡佬
gengyi jiuzhi　更易舊制
genjiqian　根基錢
genyi　跟役
getong wunü　歌童舞女
gezhiliuren　革職留任
gong　公 (noble rank, duke)
Gong Jinghan　龔景瀚
Gong Qiwei　龔其位
Gong Wenyu　龔文玉
Gongchang　鞏昌

Gou Chaojiu　苟朝九
Gou Wenming　苟文明
Gou Wenrun　苟文潤
Gu Erchang　顧爾昌
Gu Jiqi　谷際岐
guanbiminfan　官逼民反
Guancheng　觀成
Guandu River　官渡河
Guang'an　廣安
Guangchusi　廣儲司
Guangfu　廣福
Guanghua　光化
guangkaiyanlu　廣開言路
Guangtoushan　光頭山
Guangyuan　廣元
Guanwannao　灌灣腦
guanyong　官勇
Guanzhuang　官莊
Guanzhuangdian　貫莊店
Gucheng　谷城
guhuo pianqian　鼓惑騙錢
Gui Han　桂涵
Guihua　歸化
Guizhou　歸州 (in Hubei)
gumu xiangyong　僱募鄉勇
Gun River　滾河
Guo Yuanji　郭淵极
Guolin　國霖
Guolu　嘓嚕
Guoshiguan　國史館
Guwangheo (C. Guanghou)　廣厚
Guwanghing (C: Guangxing)　廣興
Guyuan　固原

Hailanca (C: Hailancha)　海蘭察
Han Dingjin　韓鼎晉
Han Guangzu　韓光祖
Han San'ge　韓三個
Han Sige　韓四個
Hanwangcheng　漢王城
Hanyin　漢陰
Hanzhang Shuyuan　晗章書院
Hanzhong　漢中
Hao Yizhi　郝以智
He Ruhui　何如會
He Yuanqing　何元卿
Hejiayuan　何家院
Helin　和琳
Hengqing　恆慶
Hengshanzi　橫山子
Hengšui (C: Hengrui)　恆瑞
Herong　河溶
Hešen (C: Heshen)　和珅

Hezhou 河州
Hong Liangji 洪亮吉
Hongfeng 弘豊
Hongqian 紅簽
Hongyanbao 紅巖堡
hou 侯 (noble rank, marquis)
Hu Dingtai 胡定泰
Hu Mingyuan 胡明遠
Hu Qilun 胡啓倫
Hu San Shifu 胡三師傅
Hu Shixian 胡時顯
Hu Yuankui 胡元魁
Hu Zhengzhong 胡正中
hu 斛
hualing 花翎
huan qiankun 換乾坤
huan shijie 換世界
Huang'an 黃安
Huangbaipeng 黃柏棚
Huangbaishan 黃柏山
Huanghao 黃號
Huanglongdang 黃龍墈
Huanglongpu 黃龍舖
Huanglongtan 黃龍灘
Huangpi 黃陂
huawugongqi 花蜈蚣旗
Huayang 華陽
Huguang 湖廣
huiguan 會館
Huiling 惠齡
Huilun 惠倫
huipiao 匯票
Huixian 徽縣
Hujiazhai 胡家砦
Hunyuan 混元
Hunyuan dianhua jing 混元點化經
huodan 火彈
huohao 火耗
huojian 火箭
Huoqiying 火器營

Ili (C: Yili) 伊犁
Inaba Kunzan 稻葉君山
Ingšan (C: Yingshan) 英善

Ji Darong 冀大榮
Ji Shengbao 吉陞保
Jiahezhou 夾河州
Jialing River 嘉陵江
jianbi qingye 堅壁清野
Jianchiba 簡池垻
Jiang Sheng 江晟
Jiangbei 江北

Jiangjiadang　江家墻
Jiangjunshan　將軍山
Jiangkou　江口 (in Sichuan and Shaanxi)
Jiangyou　江油
Jianruiying　健銳營
jiansheng　監生
Jianshi　建始
jianyong　健勇
Jianzhou　劍州
jiao　剿
jiaofu bingyong　剿撫並用
jiaofu jianshi　剿撫兼施
Jiaozhanya　交戰埡
Jiaxian　郊縣
Jie Cong　揭琮
jieshu daole　劫數到了
Jiezhou　階州
Jiguzhai　擊鼓寨
Jilantai　吉蘭泰
Jin'esi　金峩寺
jinding lingsui　金頂領催
jing　經
Jing'an　景安
jinglüe　經略
jinglüe dachen　經略大臣
Jingshan　京山
Jingzhongsi　精忠寺
Jingzhou　荊州
Jingziguan　荊紫關
Jinshanyi　金山驛
Jiqing　吉慶
Jishan　箕山
Jiulongchi　九龍池
Jixinling　鷄心嶺
Junxu Zongju　軍需總局
Junxuju　軍需局
Junzhou　均州
juxianzhazhai, tuanjuerju　据險扎寨，團聚而據

Kaifeng　開封
Kaixian　開縣
kaixuan xiangyong　凱旋鄉勇
Kaizhouping　開州坪
Kalangzhai　卡狼寨
kanding daju　勘定大局
Kashgar (C: Kashen)　喀什
kashou　卡首
Ke Fan　柯藩
Kong Chuanshi　孔傳仕
Kong Jigan　孔繼幹
kounei　口内
kouwai　口外
Kuiguan　夔關

Kuilun　魁倫
Kuizhou　夔州
kuping　庫平
Küriye (C: Kulun)　庫倫

Laifeng　來鳳
Langping　榔坪
Langzhong　閬中
Lanhao　藍號
lanling　藍翎
lanling shiwei　藍翎侍衛
lanying　濫應
lanzhi　濫支
Lanzhou　蘭州
Laomuyuan　老木園
laoshifu　老師傅
Lebao (M: Leboo)　勒保
Leiyinpu　雷音舖
Leng Tianlu　冷天祿
Lezhi　樂至
li　里
Li Biao　李彪
Li Bin　李彬
Li Chao　李潮
Li Deng'ao　李登敖
Li Fenghan　李奉翰
Li Hong　李鋐
Li Huai　李槐
Li Ji　李基
Li Jiannong　李劍農
Li Jie　李傑
Li Quaner　李犬兒
Li Sanxiazi　李三瞎子
Li Shaozu　李紹祖
Li Shihuai　李士懷
Li Shu　李述 or李淑
Li Weiben　李維本
Li Xianyi　李憲宜
Li Yuan　李元
Li Zicheng　李自成
Lianchigou　蓮池溝
Liang Kentang　梁肯堂
Liang Yougu　梁友穀
Liangchahe　兩岔河
Liangdang　兩當
liangmin　良民
Liangshan　涼山 (in Hubei's Changyang)
Liangshan　梁山 (in Sichuan)
liangtai　糧臺
liangxin　良心
Liangzhou　涼州
lianqian　斂錢
lianyong　練勇

Lichuan 利川
Liduchang 李渡場
lima 例馬
limin jintie 里民津貼
Lin Jun 林儁
Lin Lianggong 林亮功
Lin Qilong 林起龍
Lin Shuangwen 林爽文
Lin Zhihua 林之華
lingchi 凌遲
lingdui 領隊
lingdui dachen 領隊大臣
lingfei 零匪
lingjian 令箭
Linjiangshi 臨江市
Linshui 鄰水
Lithang (C: Litang) 理塘
Liu Chaoxuan 劉朝選
Liu Jinding 劉金定
Liu Junfu 劉君輔
Liu Leng 劉楞
Liu Qian 刘乾
Liu Qing 劉清
Liu Qirong 劉起榮
Liu Shengcai 劉盛才
Liu Shengzhou 劉勝洲
Liu Shizhen 劉世珍
Liu Sier 劉四兒
Liu Song 劉松
Liu Tongxun 劉統勳
Liu Xingqu 劉星蕖
Liu Xueli 劉學禮
Liu Zhahuzi 劉渣鬍子
Liu Zhiren 劉之仁
Liu Zhixie 劉之協
Liuba 留壩
Liushiqi (M: Liošici) 六十七
Lixian 禮縣
Lixinzhen 禮辛鎮
Long Shaozhou 龍紹周
Longan 龍安
Longde 隆德
Longmashan 龍馬山
Longshan 龍山
Longshanzhen 隴山鎮
Longtianmen 龍天門
Longxi 隴西
Longzhou 隴州
Lu Youren 陸有仁
Lu Zhenyang 路振揚
luange 臠割
luanmin 亂民
Ludong 蘆東

Lüeyang 略陽
lüfei 旅費
Luo Ang 雒昂
Luo Qiqing 羅其清
Luo Qishu 羅其書
Luo Siju 羅思擧
Luo Siqian 羅思潛
Luonan 雒南
Lushan 魯山
Lushi 盧氏
Lüyanyi 呂堰驛
Luyi 鹿邑
Luzhou 瀘州

Ma Chaoli 馬朝禮
Ma Huiyu 馬慧裕
Ma Liangzhu 馬良柱
Ma Mingluan 馬鳴鑾
Ma Wu 馬五
Ma Yingxiang 馬應祥
Ma Yu 馬瑜
Ma Yuanshuai 馬元帥
Ma Zhaorui 馬兆瑞
Mabazhai 麻壩寨
magan 馬乾
Manchuanguan 漫川關
Mao Jindao 卯金刀
Maoping 茅坪
maoshou 矛手
Maozishan 帽子山
maozishou 矛子手
Matigang 馬蹄崗
Meixian 郿縣
Mi Guang 米廣
Mianxian 沔縣
Mianzhou 綿州
Miaorong 苗容
minfu 民伕
Minghing (C: Mingxing) 明興
Mingliang (M: Mingliyang) 明亮
Mingšui (C: Mingrui) 明瑞
Mingzheng 明正
minjian bangtie 民間幫貼
minjian zixing tuanlian zhi yong 民間自行團練之勇
minyong 民勇
minzhuang 民壯
Mixi 米溪
mizheyin 米折銀
mojienian 末結年
Mukedeng'a 穆克登阿
Mukedengbu 穆克登布
Muping 木坪
Muran (C: Mulan) 木蘭

nan 男 (noble rank, baron)
Nanbu 南部
Nanjiang 南江
nanjiaodasi 南郊大祀
Nanlong 南籠
Nansha River 南沙河
Nanshan 南山
Nanshufang 南書房
Nanzhang 南漳
Nanzhao 南召
Nanzheng 南鄭
Nashan 那山
Naxi 纳溪
Nayanbao 那彦寶
Nayancheng (M: Nayanceng) 那彦成
Necin (C: Neqin) 訥親
neidi luanmin 内地亂民
Neiku 内庫
neitang 内帑
Neixiang 内鄉
Neyin 訥音
Nian Gengyao 年羹堯
Nianyutan 鮎魚灘
niaoqiang 鳥槍
Nie Chi 聶池
Nie Jieren 聶傑人
Nihekou 泥河口
Ningqiang 寧羌
Ningshan 寧陝
Niu Ba 牛八

Oboi (C: Aobai) 鼇拜
Ohūi (C: Ehui) 鄂輝
Ortai (C: Eertai) 鄂爾泰

pan 盼
Pan Shaojing 潘紹經
Pang Hongsheng 龐洪勝
Panshixiang 磐石鄉
pengmin 棚民
Pengshan 彭山
Pengxi 蓬溪
Pengzhou 蓬州
Pihepu 毘河舖
Pingkou River 平口河
Pingli 平利
Pingliang 平涼
pingyu 平餘
Pu Dafang 蒲大芳
Pu Lin 浦霖
Pu Tianbao 蒲天寶

Qi Guodian 齊國典

Qi Guomo　齊國謨
Qi Lin　齊林
Qi Sigu　齊四姑
Qi Wang Shi　齊王氏
qiangpaoruyu　槍炮如雨
Qianhe　前河
Qianyang　汧陽
qianzong　千總
Qiaoqiaohui　悄悄會
qiepan　切盼
Qige　七格
Qiguzhai　旗鼓寨
Qijiaying　齊家營
Qin Cheng'en　秦承恩
Qin'an　秦安
qinchai　欽差
qinchai dachen　欽差大臣
Qing River　清江
Qingcheng　慶成
Qinggui　慶桂
Qinghao　青號
Qingjing Hunyuan Jiao　清淨混元教
Qingpu　慶溥
Qingshui　清水
Qingxichang　清溪場
Qingyanwo Yuanshuai　青眼窩元帥
Qingziya　青字埡
Qinkou　秦口
Qinling　秦嶺
Qinzhou　秦州
Qishiwu　七十五
qishou　旗手
Qiu Xingjian　裘行簡
Qixingba　七星壩
Qu River　渠河
Quanbao　全保
Quanxi　泉溪
Quxian　渠縣

Ran Tianshi　冉天士
Ran Tianyuan　冉天元
Ran Wenchou　冉文儔
Ran Xuesheng　冉學勝
Rao Mingchu　饒明楚
Ren River　仁河
Ronghuahui　榮華會
Ru River　汝河
Ruan Xuepeng　阮学鹏
Ruxueshu　儒學署
ruyiqi　如意旗

Saicungga (C: Saichonga)　賽沖阿
Salar (C: Salaer)　撒拉爾

Sanchabu　三叉埠
Sanchahe　三岔河
sanfei　散匪
Sangjisitaer　桑吉斯塔爾
Sanjianshan　三尖山
Santai　三臺
Sanyang　三陽
Sanyang liaodao jing　三陽了道經
Shan'an　陝安
shanghao　賞號
shangjuan　商捐
Shangkan　上龕
Shangnan　商南
Shan'gou　陝溝
Shangzhou　商州
shanhou　善後
Shanyang　山陽
shanzhai　山寨
Shanzhou　陝州
Shaoxing　紹興
Shaozuozhuangjia duozuoxie, qiyuebulai bayuelai　少做莊稼多做鞋，七月不來八月來
shecang　社倉
Shehong　射洪
Shen Ying　沈瀛
sheng　升
shengdanyin　升丹銀
Shen'gou　深溝
Shengjing　盛京
Shenxuanyi　神宣驛
Shi Jin　施縉
Shi Yunyu　石蘊玉
Shi Zuorui　石作瑞
Shibantuo　石板沱
Shifengpu　石峰堡
Shimenzhai　石門寨
Shinan　施南
Shiquan　石泉
shiyuwan liang　十余萬兩
shoubei　守備
shoubing　守兵
Shouhuang Hall　壽皇殿
Shouyuan　收元
shu　疏
Shuanggou　雙溝
Shuangmiaochang　雙廟場
Shuangqing　雙慶
Shuliang　舒亮
Shunqing　順慶
shusheng　書生
Sifangtai　四方臺
Sofingga (C: Suofeiying'a)　索費英阿
Song Shu　宋澍
Song Wen'gao　宋文高

Song Zhiqing　宋之清
Songjiaya　宋家垭
Songpan　松潘
Songxian　嵩縣
Songyun　松筠
Su Sishisan　蘇四十三
Suchonga　蘇冲阿
Suiding　綏定
Suining　遂寧
suiying changfu　隨營長夫
suiying liangyuan　隨營糧員
suiyingfu　隨營夫
suizheng xiangyong　隨征鄉勇
Suizhou　隨州
Šulin (C: Shulin)　書麟
Sun Laowu　孫老五
Sun Qingyuan　孫清遠
Sun Rongyuan　孫榮原
Sun Shifeng　孫侍奉
Sun Shiyi　孫士毅
Sun Xiyuan　孫熙遠
Sun Zaigong　孫在公
Suomo　梭磨
Suzhou　肅州

Taibu　台布
Taihe　太和
Taihezhen　太和鎮
Taiping　太平
Taipusi　太僕寺
taishang huangdi　太上皇帝
Taiyangjing　太陽經
taizi shaobao　太子少保
taizi taibao　太子太保
Tan Guangdian　覃光典
Tan Jiayao　覃加耀
Tang Daxin　唐大信
Tang Sijiao　湯思蛟
Tangxian　唐縣
Tanjiacun　覃家村
tanmatou　探馬頭
Tian Chaogui　田朝貴
Tian Gudun　田谷敦
Tian Wenxu　田文煦
Tianbaozhai　天保寨
tianwang　天王
Tianyun　天運
tidian　提點
Tiewasi　鉄瓦寺
tifubaochou　替夫報仇
Tingzipu　亭子鋪
tixun　提巡
Tojin (C: Tuojin)　托津

Tong River 潼河
Tongbai 桐柏
Tongchuan 潼川
Tongguan 潼關
tonghuiren 通慧人
Tongjiang 通江
tongpan 通判
Tongren 銅仁
tongzhi 同知
tu 土
Tu Miao 土苗
tuan 團
tuanlian 團練
tuanlian xiangyong 團練鄉勇
tuanyong 團勇
tubing 土兵
tufei 土匪
Tujia 土家
tulian 土練
tunfan 屯番
Tuo Xiangyao 庹向瑤
tuozhe 駝折
tuozhe fujia 駝折夫價
tuozhe fuma 駝折夫馬

Uliastai (C: Wuliyasutai) 烏里雅蘇臺

Waiku 外庫
waiwei 外委
Wang Chengpei 汪承霈
Wang Conger 王聰兒
Wang Dashu 王大叔
Wang Dengting 王登廷
Wang Dexian 王得先
Wang Faseng 王法僧
Wang Guangzu 王光祖
Wang Guoxian 王國賢
Wang Guoxiong 王國雄
Wang Huaiyu 王懷玉
Wang Jie 王杰
Wang Jiwen 王繼文
Wang Kai 王凱
Wang Linggao 王凌高
Wang Lun 王倫
Wang Mingde 王明德
Wang Nangxian 王囊仙
Wang Quanli 王全禮
Wang Sanhuai 王三槐
Wang Shigui 王世貴
Wang Shihu 王士虎
Wang Shuangxi 王雙喜
Wang Tingzhao 王廷昭
Wang Wenlong 王文龍

Wang Wenxiong 王文雄
Wang Wenyong 王文湧
Wang Xin 汪新
Wang Xueli 王學禮
Wang Ying 汪瀛
Wang Yinghu 王應琥
Wang Zhaomeng 王兆夢
Wang Zhiliang 王之亮
Wang Zijian 王自儉
Wang Zijun 王子君
Wang Zilu 王自祿
Wang Zuojing 王作經
Wangjiacaiyuan 王家菜園
Wangjiazhai 王家寨
Wangjiazui 王家嘴
Wanli 萬利
Wanxian 萬縣
Wanyan Dai 完顏岱
Wanyuan 萬源
Washiping 瓦石坪
Wei Bangbang 魏棒棒
Wei Sishu 魏思述
Wei Yuan 魏源
Wei Zhongcai 魏忠才
weixin 維新
wen 文
Wen Chenghui 溫承惠
Wenchongxi 蚊蟲溪
Wenchun 溫春.
Wenfu 溫福
Wentangjing 溫湯井
Wentu 文圖
wenxian 文仙
Wenxian 文縣
Wesibu (C: Woshenbu) 倭什布
Wesingge (C. Woxing'e) 窩星額
Wu Huaizhi 伍懷志
Wu Jinzhu 伍金柱
Wu Tinggang 吳廷剛
Wu Wenjing 吳文璟
Wu Wensen 伍文森
Wu Xiongguang 吳熊光
Wuchang 武昌
Wudang 武當
Wuduhe 霧渡河
Wufengzhai 五峰寨
Wuguan 武關
wuhezhizhong 烏合之衆
Wujiaying 伍家營
Wuyingshan 無影山
Wukuaishi 五塊石
Wula'na 伍拉納
Wulang 五郎

Wushan 巫山
wushenglaomu 無生老母
wuxian 武仙
wuzhi mingliang 武職名糧
Wuzuoyun 五作雲

Xian Dachuan 鮮大川
Xianfeng 咸豐
xianfeng 先鋒
Xianfu 先福
xiang 鄉
Xiangluping 香爐坪
Xiangyang 襄陽
xiangyong 鄉勇
Xianhao 線號
xianyuweixin 咸與維新
Xiao Gui 蕭貴
Xiao Yishan 蕭一山
Xiaogan 孝感
xiaoqian 小錢
Xiaoxian 孝賢
Xiaoyi 孝義
Xiaoyou 小坳
Xichong 西充
Xichuan 淅川
Xie Tianxiu 謝天繡
“Xiejiaoshuo” 邪教說
xiejiyin 協濟銀
xiexiang 協餉
Xigu 西固
Xihe 西和
Xihua 西華
Xijintai 西津泰
Ximing 喜明
Xin Cong 辛聰
Xin Dou 辛斗
xinbing 新兵
Xindianzi 新店子
Xing’an 興安
Xingkui 興奎
Xingzhao 興肇
xingzhuangyin 行裝銀
xingzou 行走
Xinning 新寧
Xintan 新灘
Xinye 新野
xinyong 新勇
Xiong Cui 熊翠
Xiong Fangqing 熊芳青
Xiping 西坪
Xitian Dacheng Jiao 西天大乘教
Xiujinzhen 秀金鎮
Xixiang 西鄉

Xu Guotai 徐國泰
Xu Jing 徐經
Xu Liang 徐良
Xu Pei 徐珮
Xu Tiande 徐天德
Xu Tianshou 徐天壽
Xu Wanfu 徐萬富
Xu Wenmo 許文謨
Xuanen 宣恩
Xue Dalie 薛大烈
Xujiaba 徐家壩
Xunhua 循化
Xunyang 洵陽
xushang 卹賞

Yan Jian 顏檢
Yan Ruyi 嚴如熤
Yan Shengke 顏盛可
Yan Shihong 嚴士鋐
Yan Tianpei 顏天培
Yan Zhaobiao 言朝標
yancaiyin 鹽菜銀
Yang Fang 楊芳
Yang Ji 杨集
Yang Kaidi 楊開第
Yang Kaijia 楊開甲
Yang Kui 楊揆
Yang Kuiyou 楊奎猷
Yang Qiyuan 楊啓元
Yang Yingju 楊應琚
Yang Yuchun 楊遇春
Yang Zhizhen 楊之震
yanglianyin 養廉銀
Yangxian 洋縣
Yansui 延綏
Yanting 鹽亭
Yanzhou 兗州
Yao Wenxue 姚文學
Yao Xinzuo 姚馨佐
Yao Xueying 姚學瑛
Yao Zhifu 姚之富
Yexian 葉縣
Yeyuguan 斜峪關
Yezhuping 野竹坪 or 野豬坪
Yichang 宜昌
Yicheng 宜城
Yidu 宜都
yigongdaizhen 以工代賑
Yijiang'a 伊江阿
yilinweihe 以鄰爲壑
Yilong 儀隴
Yimian (M: Šanggan) 宜綿
Yin Yingtu 尹英圖

Yingcheng　應城
Yingshan　應山 (in Hubei)
Yingshan　營山 (in Sichuan)
yingyu　盈餘
yinluo　銀鏍
yinpai　銀牌
yinzhao　陰照
yishou　義首
yixu　議叙
yiyifuren　以義輔仁
yiyong　義勇
yizuiyin　議罪銀
Yongbao　永保
Yongde　永德
Yongding River　永定河
Yonglian　永璉
Yongning　永寧
Yongxing　永瑆
Yongxuan　永璇
Yongyan　顒琰
You Hanyu　尤漢玉
youji　游擊
Youyang　酉陽
Yuan Guohuang　袁國璜
Yuan'an　遠安
yuanshuai　元帥
Yuanxiangji　原香集
yuding　餘丁
Yue Zhongqi　岳鍾琪
Yuechi　岳池
Yuelaichang　悅來場
Yuguan　虞關
yunqiwei　雲騎尉
Yunxi　鄖西
Yunxian　鄖縣
Yunyang　鄖陽 (in Hubei)
Yunyang　雲陽 (in Sichuan)
yuqian dachen　御前大臣
yuqian shiwei　御前侍衛

zafu youmin　雜夫游民
Zaoyang　棗陽
Zeng Jing　曾靜
Zeng Shi　曾世
Zeng Zhixiu　曾芝秀
Zeng Xianzhang　曾賢章
Zengshun　增順
zhaibao　寨堡
zhaidong　寨硐
Zhaijiazhai　翟家寨
zhaishou　寨首
zhaiyong　寨勇
zhaizhang　寨長

Zhaketaer　扎克塔爾
Zhan Shijue　詹世爵
zhanbing　戰兵
zhandao　棧道
Zhang Daoyuan　张道源
Zhang Guangsi　張廣泗
Zhang Hanchao　張漢朝
Zhang Jindou　張進斗
Zhang Lianghuai　張良槐
Zhang Shihu　張士虎
Zhang Shilong　張士龍
Zhang Tianlun　張天倫
Zhang Tingyu　張廷玉
Zhang Xianzhong　張獻忠
Zhang Xiaoyuan　张效元
Zhang Xunlong　張馴龍
Zhang Zhengchao　張正朝
Zhang Zhengmo　張正謨
Zhang Zicong　張子聰
Zhangcunpeng　章村棚
Zhangjiadang　張家壋
Zhangjiaguan　張家觀
Zhangyipu　張易舖
zhanshou　戰手
Zhao Hongzhou　趙洪周
Zhao Mahua　趙麻花
Zhao Yiying　趙易應
Zhaohua　昭化
zhaozhongci　昭忠祠
Zhen'an　鎮安
zheng-fang xiangyong　征防鄉勇
Zheng Wenli　鄭文禮
zhengzei　正賊
zhenkongjiaxiang, wushengfumu　真空家鄉，無生父母
Zhenping　鎮平 (in Henan)
Zhenping　鎮坪 (in Shaanxi)
zhenzhendeshengqi　陣陣得勝旗
Zhijiang　枝江
zhijiyin　致祭銀
Zhong Lian　鍾蓮
Zhongbaozhai　終報寨
Zhonghe　中河
Zhongjia Miao　仲家苗
Zhongjiang　中江
Zhongxiang　鍾祥
Zhongyuanjie　中元節
Zhongzhou　忠州
Zhou Guoshu　周國樞
Zhou Jingfu　周景福
Zhou Shigui　周士貴
Zhou Tianxu　周天绪
Zhou Xingdai　周興岱
Zhou Teng Shi　周滕氏

Zhoujiaping　周家坪
Zhouzhi　盩厔
Zhu　朱
Zhu Gui　朱珪
Zhu Hongdao　朱洪道
Zhu Hongtao　朱紅桃
Zhu Mo　朱謨
Zhu Shedou　朱射斗
Zhu Xun　朱勳
zhuangding　壯丁
Zhuanglang　莊浪
Zhulizhai　朱里寨
Zhushan　竹山
Zhuxi　竹溪
Zhuyuguan　竹峪關
Zhuzishan　竹子山
zi　子 (noble rank, viscount)
Ziguangge　紫光閣
zijiang　紫繮
Ziqiu　滋邱
ziquzhuolu　自趨拙路
zishu　自述
Zitong　梓潼
Ziyang　紫陽
zongbing　總兵
zongguan　總管
zongxianfeng　總先鋒
zongyuntai　総運臺
zoukai　奏凱
zouxiao　奏銷
Zu Zhiwang　祖之望
Zushiguan　祖師觀

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Epigraph: *QSLJQ*, 1/14b.

1 The year 1796 was the year *bingchen* in the Chinese calendar, *bing* representing the third heavenly stem and *chen* representing the branch of the dragon.

2 This was the only time during the entire Qing dynasty that a living emperor abdicated his throne to his successor. The reign of the new Jiaqing emperor started on New Year's Day of 1796. For the enthroning ceremony, see *QSLJQ*, 1/8a–18a.

3 There were two or three dragon days in each lunar month. The hour of the dragon was the period from about nine to ten a.m.

4 The only episode from the White Lotus War that was celebrated in the period was the story of Wang Conger, a woman rebel who later became one of the leaders of the rebel force from Xiangyang, Hubei.

5 The most important works on the sectarian movement in late imperial China include Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion*, and Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion* and *Shantung Rebellion*. For the sectarian background of the White Lotus uprisings, see Gaustad, "Religious Sectarianism."

6 McCaffrey, "Living through Rebellion," examines several uprisings in Hubei.

7 Jones and Kuhn, "Dynastic Decline," 136–44.

8 With the intention of stimulating the reinvigoration of the Qing military in the wake of the Opium War, *Chronicle of Imperial Military Campaigns* documents all major wars waged by the Qing since its founding era.

9 The title of the official chronicle is *Qinding jiaoping sansheng xiefei fanglüe* (Imperially sanctioned chronicle of the campaign to suppress the heretical bandits).

10 Wei Yuan devoted one *juan*, "Account of the Militias in Sichuan, Hubei and Shaanxi during the Jiaqing Period" (Jiaqing Chuan Hu Shaan xiangbing ji), to the militias, although he focused only on several of the most distinguished militiaman. On the fortification, see 384–85, 419–20, 433–36.

11 This book was first published by Waseda University Press. Inaba was on the faculty of Waseda University in the early twentieth century before he went to Korea, where he served as a historian in the Japanese colonial government. His later works are mainly on Korean history.

12 Inaba, *Qingchao quanshi*, 2:18–34.

13 The first edition of the Chinese translation was published in 1915 in Shanghai.

It was translated by several people and edited by Dan Tao, a participant in Sun Yat-sen's revolution and a senior bureaucrat during the Republic period.

14 Xiao Yishan, *Qingdai tongshi*, 2:294–335.

15 The title of the book is *Zuijin sanshinian Zhongguo zhengzhishi (1898–1928)* (Chinese political history of the past thirty years, 1898–1929). Li Jiannong does not give the source of his discussion on the White Lotus War, even though he uses a long quotation from Inaba's book with some alterations. But he does mention Inaba's name when he cites his views on the Hunan Army later in the book; see pp. 76–77.

16 Li, *Political History*, 7–8.

17 Philip A. Kuhn considers the two tactics key to the suppression of the White Lotus rebels and the precursor of the "militarization of society" in the mid-nineteenth century when the Qing battled the Taiping Rebellion. *Rebellion and Its Enemies*, 41–50. Zhuang Jifa cites Li Jiannong's statement as a definitive conclusion regarding the White Lotus War in *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 215–16. Also see Fairbank, *China: A New History*, 189–91; Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 9–10.

18 This view is one of the premises in a recent work on the Jiaqing period: Wensheng Wang, *White Lotus Rebels and South China Pirates*.

19 *QSLJQ*, 1/14b.

20 This has been a consensus among Qing historians, e.g., Elliott, *Emperor Qianlong*, 160–61.

21 In 1773, only seven of the seventeen sons of Qianlong were living. On Qianlong's reluctant choice of Yongyan as his successor, see Zhu, "Qianlong jianchu," 91–96, and Elliott, *Emperor Qianlong*, 47–48.

22 Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, 21–24. For Qianlong's edict on retirement, *QLSYD*, 18:128–30.

23 Hešen had sent Wu Xinglan, Hešen's teacher of yore, to work under Jiaqing while spying on the latter. Feng, *Heshen pingzhuan*, 51, 248–51. On Jiaqing's adroit handling of his apprenticeship, see Zhu, "Qianlong jianchu," 98–102.

24 On Qianlong's "midlife crisis," see Guy, "Personnel Policy."

25 Hešen's meteoric rise has been well documented and discussed in the scholarship; e.g., Feng, *Heshen pingzhuan*, 32–48.

26 David S. Nivison has expressed doubt regarding the view that Hešen alone was responsible for the lost fortune of the Qing dynasty. Nivison, "Ho-shen and His Accusers," 217. Feng Zuozhe echoes this opinion in *Heshen pingzhuan*.

27 Yoon, "Prosperity with the Help of 'Villains.' "

28 When Green Standard personnel were deployed to wars, their regular stipends were paid in full to their families and by their home provinces. *Qinding Hubu zeli*, 1865 edition, 73/41a. When bannermen were deployed, their stipends and food rations could be given to their relatives, if they so chose, or they were stored and given to them when they returned. If bannermen were on official missions to the front, their pay could be sent to them. Ibid., 79/26a–b.

29 *QLSYD*, 16:316.

30 Naquin, *Shantung Rebellion*, 146.

31 Theobald, *War Finance*, 36–43.

32 When the Kangxi emperor (r. 1662–1722) led the expeditions to the steppe to engage the Zunghar Mongols in the 1690s, he appointed several court officials to direct the logistical tasks and designated a Green Standard contingent to escort the logistical corps.

33 Dai, "Qing State."

34 In 1760, after the elimination of the Zunghar kingdom and the subjugation of the Muslim communities in Eastern Turkestan, the Ministry of Revenue had set up regulations on the auditing of war expenditures. *JXZL*, 3b–4a.

35 In the edict to launch this project, Qianlong mercilessly criticized the abuses in the war, especially excessive awards to soldiers, highly inflated pay to massive military labor forces, and honorific titles lavished on lower-ranking officials who worked for the logistical system. *JXZL*, 1a–b.

36 The statute's three parts are *Hubu junxu zeli* (Statute of wartime expenditures concerning the Ministry of Revenue), *Bingbu junxu zeli* (Statute of wartime expenditures concerning the Ministry of War), and *Gongbu junxu zeli* (Statute of wartime expenditures concerning the Ministry of Works).

37 But Green Standard soldiers could "borrow" 6 to 10 taels before their deployment, which would be deducted from their stipends for several years afterward. *JXZL*, Hubu, *j*. 1.

38 *JXZL*, 1a–b.

39 Dai, "Reaching the Empire's Limits."

40 The Green Standard Army made unexpected contributions in suppressing the Wu Sangui Rebellion in the late seventeenth century, which had somewhat elevated its status, whereas the Manchu bannermen showed some weariness and ineffectiveness.

41 For the military's involvement in commerce, see Dai, "*Yingyun Shengxi*," which also discusses the issue of Qianlong's extension of the "silver to nourish virtue" to his military officials.

42 Although it was impossible for nonbannermen Chinese to serve in the banner system, bannermen were frequently appointed to high-ranking positions in the Green Standard Army. Ding, "Youguan Qingdai Baqi," and Fu, "Baqi guanbing."

43 Chu, "Introductory Study," 148–49; Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 161–64. Those sects included the White Lotus (Bailian), Luo, Huangtian, Hongyang, Wenxiang, and Eight Trigrams (Bagua), from which some more sects derived.

44 Naquin, "Transmission of White Lotus Sectarianism."

45 Although many scholars consider it useful to use "White Lotus" as an umbrella name for numerous sects during the Ming and Qing periods, some have criticized this usage. See, for example, Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion*, 73, 109–29, Ma, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao jianshi*, 63–65.

46 The most important works on the sectarian faith and doctrines include those by Overmyer, Naquin, ter Haar, Yu, and Ma. The most important work on the sectarian networks in central China in the late eighteenth century is Gaustad, "Religious Sectarianism and the State." Only a few scholars have written on the financial aspect of the sectarian movement; see, for example, Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion*, 49–53, 280; Suzuki, *Shinchō chūkishi*, 113–15. The most detailed account on the income and expenses of sects in Qing times is in Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 449–90.

47 According to Susan Naquin, the rate varied from 100 *wen* to several hundred *wen*. *Millenarian Rebellion*, 280. But the sectarians in Hubei's Fangxian paid as much as 1 tael of silver in the late Qianlong period. Qi Zhongyao's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:25.

48 Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 449–69.

49 *QLSYD*, 16:405–6; Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 473–75. Naquin mentions that the money was also spent on preparations for uprisings but also points out that the leaders secured a handsome income from the money collected from the members. *Millenarian Rebellion*, 50–52.

50 In the People's Republic of china, almost all work on the White Lotus War takes social crises as the main cause of the rebellion. The earliest example is in Dong Caishi, "Shilun Chuan Chu Bailianjiao." Outside China, Suzuki has championed this view first in *Shinchō chūkishi*, 29–96, and then in *Chūgoku shi*,

152–66.

51 Wu Xiongguang stated in 1800 that southern Shaanxi was full of shed people, who were inclined to join the sects. *XFFL*, 150/27a–b.

52 Dong, "Shilun Chuan Chu Bailianjiao"; Feng, *Heshen pingzhuan*, 233–36.

53 This was the case in Shaanxi's Xing'an prefecture. A new Green Standard command, the Xing-Han command, was set up to maintain order south of the Han River. *XFFL*, 28/42b–43a.

54 He, *Huangchao jingshi*, 85/27.

55 Those plants remained operational during the White Lotus War except for several months in 1802, when the provincial authorities of Shaanxi ordered them to suspend their operation for the time being.

56 The perception that those shed people were dangerous and susceptible to sectarian agitation had been initially created during the White Lotus War and then perpetuated in the postwar period. Yan Ruyi, a prefect in southern Shaanxi since 1800, was most vocal in advocating this view. Yet Yan did not have sufficient first-hand evidence to prove that the shed people were the backbone of the rebellion. On Yan and his effort in local reconstruction in the postwar era, see McMahon, *Rethinking the Decline*, part 3: "Management of Southern Shaanxi Highlands."

57 Dai, *Sichuan Frontier*, 190–98.

58 NGDK, 119616, 147575. Fuk'anggan was the nephew of Qianlong's first empress, and one of the leading generals in the late Qianlong period. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese*, 253–55.

59 There were numerous edicts on the issue in the 1780s and 1790s. *QLSYD*, vols. 16–18. In the last few years of the Qianlong period, sectarian activities and devalued coins were considered two major problems in Sichuan. *QLSYD*, 18:132–33, 166–67, 176–77, 198–99.

60 Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion*, 45, 48, 73–108, 130–45; Suzuki, *Chūgoku shi*, 56–60.

61 Intellectual developments included popularization of the Wang Yangming school of Confucianism in society and new developments in Buddhist theory. Yu, *Ming Qing Bailianjiao*, 108–9.

62 Chu, "Introductory Study," 69–70; Yu, *Ming Qing Bailianjiao*, 34–35.

63 Allowing the sexes to mingle freely, even allowing sexual intercourse, aroused hostility from the state and orthodox Buddhists alike. However, it served to be a huge attraction for male participants. Yu, *Ming Qing Bailianjiao*, 3.

64 Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion,* 48; Yu, *Ming Qing Bailianjiao*, 91, 108; Chu, "Introductory Study," 35–36, 55–56, 81–82.

65 Naquin, *Shantung Rebellion*.

66 The Qing court revised and expanded the law against heresy at least twenty-seven times between the 1640s and the 1830s. Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 27–59, 65–191.

67 *QLSYD*, 16:370–71. But this measure did not stop the sectarians from spreading their teaching in the places of their exile.

68 The sect, Longtianmen (Heavenly Gate of Dragon), was founded in Shandong's Xincheng. Qianlong directed officials to punish the sectarians already caught by displaying them in cangues or whipping them, and then sending their masterminds into exile, but not to conduct a widespread manhunt. *QLSYD*, 16:341.

69 For instance, in the case mentioned above, only eighteen days after his edict instructing officials not to severely punish the sectarians, Qianlong fumed when he learned that only a few of the accused had been exiled to Xinjiang, and he ordered them to upgrade the punishment to await execution by hanging in the

coming autumn. *QLSYD*, 16:377.

70 Polachek has narrated similar dynamics in *The Inner Opium War*. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between his case and this one.

71 Thanks to the efforts of Taipei's Palace Museum and the Modern History Institute of Academia Sinica, tens of thousands of archives from the Jiaqing period have been digitized and made accessible on the internet.

72 According to the Qing record, one rebel, who was literate and served as an advisor to a rebel leader, had written down all the sectarian teachers' names and the dates and places of the battles they had fought. *XFFL*, 2611a–b.

73 They are included in the five-volume collection *Qing zhongqi wusheng Bailianjiao qiyi ziliao* (*BLJZL*).

1. REBELLION, 1796–1797

Epigraph: Liu Zhixie's confession, *Jiaobudang*, 05/08/07, 137.

1 Fan told the authorities that he had fewer than forty members. *QSLQL*, 980/10a–12b, 983/26a–27a; Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 164. For the different views on the origins of the Hunyuan sect, see Ma and Han, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, 1258–93; Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 91–92; Gaustad, "Religious Sectarianism," 140–54, and "Prophets and Pretenders."

2 *Lingchi* (death by a thousand cuts) was an extreme form of execution by cutting off all the flesh of the executed piece by piece. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, plotting rebellion was subject to this penalty. Brook, Bourgon, and Blue, *Death by a Thousand Cuts*, 55, 68–87.

3 *QSLQL*, 983/26a–27a; *QLSYD*, 18:272.

4 *QLSYD*, 18:272; Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 164–65; Suzuki, *Sennen ōkkuteki*, 296–99.

5 Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 165; Gaustad, "Religious Sectarianism," 158–64.

6 Nanyang's Jiahezhou was one of those enclaves. *XFFL*, 9/7a.

7 *QLSYD*, 18:252.

8 They changed the title of the Hunyuan scripture *Hunyuan dianhua jing* to *Sanyang liaodao jing*, or "Sutra for Understanding the Way of Three Yang" (*QLSYD*, 18:272).

9 Liu Zhixie's confession, *Jiaobudang*, 05/08/07, 137.

10 Xu Zengzhong and Lin Yi allude to Liu Zhixie's business intent in "Liu Zhixie," 195–98.

11 *QLSYD*, 18:272, 274. On Wang Huaiyu's high status, see Gaustad, "Religious Sectarianism," 154–57.

12 Gaustad agrees that Wang Huaiyu did not play a role in the new sect. "Religious Sectarianism," 203.

13 *BLJZL*, 1:28; *QLSYD*, 18:255–56, 271–73.

14 Zhang Xiaoyuan's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:113; Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 474.

15 Suzuki has pointed out that money was the key issue in the Liu-Song schism. *Sennen ōkkuteki*, 302–3.

16 Founded by Xu Guotai and Xu Pei in 1763 in Shanxi, the Shouyuan sect carried over certain millenarian elements from its predecessor, the Ronghuahui (Flourishing Flower Assembly), which the authorities cracked down on in 1757. It was brought to Henan and Hubei a few years afterward. On the inception of the Shouyuan sect, see Gaustad, "Religious Sectarianism," 122–36; Zhuang, *Zhenkongjiaxiang*, 147–53.

17 On Song Zhiqing's affiliation with the Shouyuan sect, see Xu and Lin, "Liu Zhixie," 184–87; Gaustad, "Religious Sectarianism," 184–94.

18 Through Xiao Gui, Fan Xueming's brother-in-law and a member of the sect,

who had migrated to southern Shaanxi from Xiangyang, Song's sect spread to southern Shaanxi. *QLSYD*, 18:151, 273.

19 "Wang Shuangxi's" original name was Liu Chenger. Liu Zhixie's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:103.

20 Some sectarians believed that "Shadowless Mountain" was in Dengfeng, Henan. *QLSYD*, 18:145–47. "Zhu Hongtao" had been created by early Triad members to rally anti-Qing sentiment. It is not clear whether Song borrowed the name from the Triad. Gaustad thinks that "Zhu Hongtao" was invented by Wang Yinghu, a Shouyuan ringleader in Hubei's Fangxian. "Religious Sectarianism," 231.

21 A sectarian said this to Liu Song when he traveled to Longde in late 1794 to alert Liu of the persecution. *QLSYD*, 18:273.

22 *QLSYD*, 18:145–47. In Shaanxi, Qin Cheng'en had detected the sectarian activities and had Xiao Gui arrested by the time Qianlong ordered the crackdown. *QLSYD* 18:150–52.

23 On QL59/09/09, Qianlong indicated his disbelief that the sectarian activities were limited to Daning and obligated Sichuan officials to widen the manhunt. *QLSYD*, 18:197. There are numerous edicts issued on the crackdown in late 1794 in *QLSYD* 18:150–282 passim.

24 *QLSYD*, 18:252, 255. In Sichuan's Daning and Taiping alone more than 120 people were arrested (p. 268). However, some people who had been arrested might not have been involved in the sectarian activities (pp. 200, 210, 218–19).

25 *QLSYD*, 18:170, 255, 294.

26 *QLSYD*, 18:251, 276. Qianlong criticized Lebao for not having detected Liu Song's sectarian activities while in exile. *QLSYD*, 18:308–9. Lebao sent Wang Faseng and six other converts from Longde to Xinjiang to be slaves of the Muslim chieftains there. *Qingdai nongmin zhanzheng*, 5:46–48.

27 *QLSYD*, 18:236, 281–82. For a detailed account of this persecution in central China, see Gaustad, "Religious Sectarianism," 207–316.

28 *QLSYD*, 18:255–56.

29 *QLSYD*, 18:334–35, 563.

30 On QL59/10/26, Qianlong ordered Liu Zhixie to be escorted from Fugou to Xiangyang for interrogation. *QLSYD*, 18:304–5. On Liu's escape in Fugou, see pp. 309–11, 334, 427–32, 479–80, 493–4.

31 Qing intelligence suggested that he went to Fancheng. *QLSYD*, 18:444–47.

32 Meanwhile, a thorough investigation was carried out on Liu's escape from Fugou, and a number of officials were punished. *QLSYD*, 18:311–614 passim.

33 *XFFL*, 8/23a–24a, 11/29–31a; Liu Zhixie's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:104–5.

34 Liu Zhixie's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:104.

35 The rebellion was not put down until 1797. Sutton, "Ethnic Revolt"; McMahon, *Rethinking the Decline*, 61–85.

36 Liu Zhixie's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:104–5.

37 For instance, a person arrested in Shandong admitted during interrogation that he was Liu Zhixie, most likely under torture. *QLSYD*, 18:477–78.

38 According to Liu Zhixie, Wang Conger had joined the discussions to plot the rebellion with Liu and Yao Zhifu. Liu's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:104–5. After the rebellion, several accounts on Wang Conger were written by literati, but all mixed into her story with rumors and sensual details.

39 After Zeng Shi, a sectarian of Xiangyang's Yicheng, was executed, his son, Zeng Xianzhang joined the uprising with Wang Conger. Zeng, then a chief, was killed in Shaanxi in early 1802. *XFFL*, 293/12b–16a.

40 At the beginning of 1796, Gao Junde, later one of the key leaders of the

uprising in Xiangyang, was arrested and tortured, but he insisted that he was an innocent citizen, which earned his release. *XFFL*, 137/4a–b.

41 For a detailed account of the first uprisings in southwestern Hubei, see McCaffrey, "Living through Rebellion," 136–58.

42 The Doggie Li story circulated only in the Yidu-Zhijiang area. Lin Zhihua, the leader of the uprising in Changyang, who studied along with Zhang under Bai Peixiang, did not seem to know it. *BLJZL*, 5:35–41.

43 Nie Jieren's, Xiang Yaoming's, and Zhang Zhengmo's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:1–9, 35–41.

44 Xiang Yaoming's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:4, 6–9; Zhang Zhengmo's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:35, 37.

45 Nie Jieren's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:1–3, 5–9.

46 GZDJQ, 0042; Zhang Zhengmo's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:35; *XFFL*, 2/19a–20b.

47 GZDJQ, 0042; Nie Jieren's and Xiang Yaoming's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:1–6; Zhang Zhengmo's and Liu Hongduo's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:35–37.

48 *XFFL*, 2/19a–20b.

49 *XFFL*, 1/1a–10a; *QSLJQ*, 2/2a–b.

50 Nie Jieren was escorted to Beijing, the first rebel chief sent there. Nie's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:1–3, 5–9; *XFFL*, 2/18a–21b; *QSLJQ*, 2/20a; *JQSYD*, 1:74.

51 Zhang Zhengmo's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:36.

52 *QSG*, 11166–68.

53 *XFFL*, 1/23a–b.

54 Nie Jieren's and Xiang Yaoming's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:1–9.

55 *XFFL*, 13/33a–35b.

56 *XFFL*, 15/11b–14b.

57 GZDJQ, 1399; *XFFL*, 16/18a–22a.

58 GZDJQ, 1246; *QSLJQ*, 38/23b; *XFFL*, 88/17a.

59 On 01/02/16, two thousand troops from Henan's Nanyang command were ordered to Hubei. Beijing also let Hubei retain twenty-some officers with *baturu* titles en route to the Miao campaign. Days later, two thousand troops from Shaanxi's Xing-Han command were sent to Hubei. *QSLJQ*, 2/8a–b, 2/12a; *XFFL*, 1/22b–23a.

60 Chen Deben's and others' confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:28–31; *QSLJQ*, 2/14b–15a, 2/18b–19a; *XFFL*, 1/19b–20b, 2/4b, 2/15b, 4/8b–9a.

61 *XFFL*, 2/6b–7b; *QSLJQ*, 2/15a.

62 Hengšui brought with him one thousand bannermen from the Xi'an banner garrison and one thousand Green Standard troops from his own command. *XFFL*, 3/10a–11a; *QSLJQ*, 2/15a.

63 *QSLJQ*, 3/3a–4b; *XFFL*, 6/25b–26a.

64 The other major Qing generals who were sent to Dangyang included Chengde, Akedonga, and Shuliang, but Chengde was soon transferred to the Laifeng theater.

65 *QSG*, 10976–78. For the Gansu fraud scandal, see Akcetin, "Corruption at the Frontier." On Bi's relationship with Hešen, see Jones, "Hung Liang-Chi," 77. Jones states that Bi "is never painted as corrupt, but rather as extraordinarily gullible."

66 Zhaolian, *Xiaoting zalu*, 342. Bi was demoted to governor of Shandong because he was not forceful in the 1794 persecution but was kept in his former position until the arrival of his successor, Funing. Still, Qianlong had an overall impression that Bi "has usually been capable." *QLSYD*, 18:178–79.

67 *XFFL*, 5/22b–25b, 6/2a–3b, 6/9b–10a, 7/33b–34a, 9/38a–39b, 10/30a–33a, 11/21a.

68 Peng, *Dangyang bi'nanji*.

69 *XFFL*, 3/3b–4a, 3/14a–15b, 5/22b–25b, 6/3b, 7/32a–33a, 11/16b–19a, 12/11a–12b.
70 *XFFL*, 12/30a–32b.
71 *XFFL*, 14/1a–4a, 13/20b–25b.
72 As Funing later claimed: "The Laifeng area has been a lair of heretical sectarians." *XFFL*, 15/38a.
73 Chen allegedly had hundreds of tenants and owned more than one huge multi-storied house and several hay-thatched houses. *XFFL*, 7/35a.
74 *QLSYD*, 18:246–47.
75 *QSLJQ*, 3/6a; Hu Zhengzhong's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:32–33; *XFFL*, 4/17b–18, 5/27a–28b, 6/14a, 9/25b, 15/7b–8a.
76 Sun first sent two hundred troops from the Pingkuai brigade to Miaorong. Then Sun himself brought five hundred troops there. He also deployed six hundred Green Standarders from the military colony in Jinchuan. *XFFL*, 4/1a–2b.
77 *BLJZL*, 1:83–86. Zhang Yongke et al.'s confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:13–17.
78 *BLJZL*, 1:128–29. In the fifth month, Sun and Funing started attacking Qiguzhai. The Qing forces captured Zhou Teng Shi, a female shaman who had led battles, and executed her by "one thousand cuts." *XFFL*, 12/8b–10b.
79 *QSLJQ*, 6/16b–17b, 7/6b; *XFFL*, 12/44a–46b.
80 *XFFL*, 12/46a–b.
81 *BLJZL*, 1:154–56. Hu Zhengzhong's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:32–33.
82 Deng Zhengji et al.'s confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:18–21; Huang Changqing et al.'s confessions, pp. 22–23; Hu Zhengzhong's confession, pp. 32–33; Yang Zhengjue et al.'s confessions, pp. 33–35; Yang Ziao's confession, pp. 41–42; *XFFL*, 5/27a–28b, 9/1b–2a, 9/15a–17a, 13/5a–8b, 13/10b, 15/5a–8a.
83 Li Deng'ao's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:43–44; Song Xiwen et al.'s confessions, pp. 44–47; *XFFL*, 17/32a–36b.
84 *XFFL*, 15/35b–36a, 137/5b–8b, 141/14b–16a.
85 Tan Jingzhong's and Tan Zulan's confessions, *BLJZL* 5:47–48; Tan Jiayao's and Zhang Zhengchao's confessions, pp. 59–64; GZDJQ, 1070; *BLJZL*, 1:152–54; *XFFL*,19/8a–b, 62/2a–3a.
86 GZDJQ, 1070, 1105, 1159, 1230, 1280, 1320, 1367, 1404.
87 Tan Jiayao's and Zhang Zhengchao's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:59–64; GZDJQ, 1320.
88 *XFFL*, 20/40a–41a, 20/43a–50a, 27/18a–19b; *QSLJQ*, 10/19b–21a.
89 *QSLJQ*, 12/7b–8a.
90 *XFFL*, 21/8a–12b, 24/32b–39b; GZDJQ, 1454.
91 *XFFL*, 27/26b.
92 *XFFL*, 30/36a–37b.
93 *XFFL*, 27/27b.
94 *QSLJQ*, 13/5a; Hummel, *Eminent Chinese*, 222–24; *Zhuan'gao*, 6752 (1–3).
95 *XFFL*, 32/23a–28a.
96 *XFFL*, 33/10a–13b.
97 *XFFL*, 34/16a–20b.
98 *XFFL*, 34/21a–22a.
99 *XFFL*, 37/3a–7a, 40/4b–6b, 40/23a–27a.
100 *XFFL*, 41/20a–23b, 41/26b–27b, 42/7a–10a.
101 Zeng Shixing's and Qi Zhongyao's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:23–28; *BLJZL*, 1:75–77; *XFFL*, 4/5b–6a, 4/19a–20a, 9/13a–15a; *QSLJQ*, 3/8b.
102 When attacking the city, the insurgents prostrated themselves on the ground and chanted spells in order to silence the defenders' muskets and cannons. To counter the spells, the defenders collected women's menstruation cloths and used them to smear their muskets and cannons with black dogs' blood and then

let pregnant women clad in red stride over them. *Fangxian zhi*, 6/21b–24b.

103 *BLJZL*, 1:77–81, 86–88, 90–95, 101–2, 107–8; *XFFL*, 5/35a–36a, 6/3b–4b, 9/21a–22a.

104 Wang Quanli's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:17–18; *XFFL*, 5/36a–37b, 8/15a–18b, 9/27a–28b.

105 *XFFL*, 6/1a–2a.

106 On 01/02/18, the throne ordered Mingliang to Hunan. *QSLJQ*, 2/7b–8a.

107 GZDJQ, 446, 476; Wang Quanli's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:17–18; *XFFL*, 8/16a–18b, 9/27a–28b; *Yunxian zhi*, 7/16b–17b.

108 *QSG*, 10928–33; Hummel, *Eminent Chinese*, 579–80; *Zhuan'gao*, 6752 (1–3).

109 During the second Jinchuan war, Mingliang was the deputy of Agūi, the commander-in-chief under whom the Qing troops won the war.

110 Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing*, 90–91.

111 Edict cited in Yimian's memorial, 01/05/03, GZDJQ, 568.

112 *XFFL*, 9/29b–32b.

113 Liu Shizhen's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:31–32; *XFFL*, 10/22a–25a, 12/4a.

114 *XFFL*, 10/33a–36b, 10/38b–39a.

115 After the Nihekou battle, Mingliang first headed to Xiangyang. GZDJQ, 496.

116 Mingliang brought with him 1,400 troops (900 from Guyuan, 100 Manchu troops from Xi'an, and 400 troops from Ningxia). *XFFL*, 12/7a–b, 13/2a–3b.

117 Liu Shizhen's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:31–32; *XFFL*, 13/25b–31a.

118 Zhaolian, *Xiaoting zalu*, 89–91.

119 *XFFL*, 26/34b–35a, 28/23b–24a, 32/29b. Gao Chengjie, Li Shu, and Wang Tingzhao brought five to six thousand people from Henan to join the uprising. Liu Qirong's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:54.

120 *XFFL*, 28/21b–22a.

121 Those "marshals" were Wang Tingzhao, Li Shu, Zhang Hanchao, Zhang Shihu, Zhang Shilong, Li Chao, Zhan Shijue, and Ruan Xuepeng. *XFFL*, 54/28b–29a.

122 On Wang's nonleading role early in the rebellion, see Xu Zengzhong, "Shilun pingjia Wang Conger."

123 Wang Tingzhao's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:120–27; *XFFL*, 242/31b–34a.

124 As reported by Delengtai at the beginning of 1800. *XFFL*, 139/30b–31a.

125 *XFFL*, 7/34a–b.

126 On 01/02/29, Wang Yi of Xiangyang was arrested in Henan's Junzhou when Wang was planning an uprising with local sectarians. *XFFL*, 4/14a–15a. On 01/03/23 Jing'an asked to deploy four hundred Manchu soldiers from his own command, consisting of nine hundred Manchu troops, to Nanyang. He also asked to deploy one thousand troops from Shandong's Yanzhou to Henan. *XFFL*, 5/16a–17a.

127 On 01/03/22, one thousand Green Standard troops from Shaanxi arrived in Xiangyang. Five hundred troops were retained in Xiangyang, and another five hundred headed to Dangyang. *XFFL*, 6/3a–b, 6/22a–b, 7/1a–3b, 7/10b–11a.

128 *XFFL*, 6/1a–2a.

129 *XFFL*, 6/18a–b.

130 *XFFL*, 6/19b–20a; 8/8b–9a.

131 *XFFL*, 6/20a–21b.

132 *XFFL*, 8/9a–10b. Qianlong's suggestion was followed. In 1796, 170 to 180 Mongol horse and ox thieves joined the war. Only 24 had survived by 1802. On the eve of the first victory in 1803, they were pardoned and allowed to return to Mongolia. *XFFL*, 344/23b–29a.

133 As revealed later, Wenfu as well as many of his men had been utterly drunk when attacked. For the fiasco, see *QSG*, 10880–82; *QSLQL*, 1005/21b–23b. For Yongbao's biography, *QSG*, 11163–66. The Qing dynasty instituted five noble

ranks, duke (*gong*), marquis (*hou*), earl (*bo*), viscount (*zi*), and baron (*nan*), and conferred them on officials with distinguished merit.

134 *QSLJQ*, 3/4a.

135 *XFFL*, 154/4b–5a.

136 *BLJZL*, 1:95–97, 100–101.

137 In the thirteenth century, Mongol forces had to besiege Fancheng and Xiangyang for three years owing to the strenuous defense by the Chinese armies. After having taken the cities in 1273, the Mongols quickly swept the Yangzi River valley. During the late Ming period, both Li Zicheng and Zhang Xianzhong captured Xiangyang. Parsons, *Peasant Rebellions*, 79–80, 106–13.

138 On 01/06/02, they suffered a defeat, after which they moved farther southeastward. Two weeks after, they were beaten in another fierce battle at Zhangjiadang, east of Zaoyang, allegedly losing three to four thousand rebels, while thousands of coerced civilians went free. They had more defeats near Suizhou in the following few weeks. *XFFL*, 9/40b–41a, 10/27a–29b, 10/39a–42a, 11/22a–24a, 12/14a–15b, 12/32b–36a.

139 *XFFL*, 11/21b–22a, 12/46a–b.

140 *XFFL*, 12/14a–15b, 13/53a–54b, 14/28a–31a.

141 *XFFL*, 15/27a–28b, 15/29b–32a, 15/38b–42a, 16/3a–6a, 16/11a–12a.

142 *BLJZL*, 1:199–201; *XFFL*, 17/1a–3a.

143 On 04/07/15, Jiaqing stated: “Yongbao allowed the bandits to escape at Zhongxiang several years ago. As a result, they went to Henan and then Shaanxi, lingering to this day.” *XFFL*, 109/33b–34a. Afterward Jiaqing reiterated the point time and again. *XFFL*, 122/9b–10a, 154/5a.

144 *XFFL*, 17/13a–15b, 17/18a–20b, 18/1a–8a, 18/11a–13a.

145 *XFFL*, 17/21b–22a.

146 Wu Xiongguang mentioned in late 1799 that he had heard about Mingliang’s discord with Yongbao in Zhongxiang before he was appointed as Henan’s governor. *XFFL*, 118/15b. Jiaqing said in 1800 that the reason Qianlong sent Mingliang to the Miao campaign was his feud with Yongbao. *XFFL*, 154/5a–b.

147 *XFFL*, 18/12a–13a, 18/13b–16b.

148 *XFFL*, 18/22a–24b.

149 The two thousand troops from the Scouting Brigade and the Firearms Brigade were led by four Manchu generals, Baketanbu, Aersalang, Neyin, and Shuoyunbao. *XFFL*, 22/43b–45a, 20/26b–27a.

150 *XFFL*, 21/35b–40a.

151 *XFFL*, 18/34a–35b, 19/5b–7a.

152 *QSG*, 11175–77.

153 Hengšui and Shuliang did not come to Jing’an’s rescue until the following morning, leaving Jing’an in a dangerous position for one night, but Yongbao did not respond at all. *XFFL*, 23/28b–30b, 23/31b–32b.

154 Although Qianlong ordered their return right away, only 900-odd troops led by Wang Wenxiong returned to Henan at the beginning of 1797. Other than 363 troops who had died, 701 Henan troops were still in Hubei. Jing’an required Bi Yuan to send them back. *XFFL*, 23/34a–35b, 24/18b–20b, 24/41b–42a.

155 *XFFL*, 24/46b–47b, 24/48a–51b.

156 *XFFL*, 22/25b–36a, 23/47b–48b, 24/9a–11a, 24/25a–26a; *QSLJQ*, 11/25b–26a. Qianlong also deprived Yongbao’s two sons of their official positions and sent them to serve in Ili without stipends. *XFFL*, 22/48a–49b.

157 *XFFL*, 22/48a–49b, 24/41a, 26/18a–20a.

158 For more on the scandal, see chapter 3.

159 In the spring of 1796, some Hubei rebels went to Daning and tried to fan the local sectarian member to rise. But Zhong Lian, Daning’s magistrate, chased

them out. *Daning xianzhi*, 5/7a; *XFFL*, 5/34a, 7/20a.

160 Xu was Sun Shifeng's disciple. Because Sun was Song Zhiqing's main disciple, Suzuki considered the sectarian enclaves in northeastern Sichuan an extension of Xiangyang's Shouyuan movement. *Sennen ōkkuteki*, 305–6.

161 *QSLJQ*, 10/5a–6a; *KJJFSB*, 1/4a.

162 Wang Sanhuai's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:65–72; *XFFL*, 19/15a–17a, 19/30a, 20/23a–b, 35/27a; *KJJFSB*, 1/3b–4a.

163 *XFFL*, 20/19a.

164 *XFFL*, 20/36b–38a.

165 GZDJQ, 1259.

166 *XFFL*, 19/16a–17a.

167 The other leaders in the Bazhou uprising were Gou Wenming and Xian Dachuan. Luo Qiqing's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:72–73, 74–75; Ran Tianyuan's confession, pp. 89–91; *XFFL*, 26/8a–10a, 27/4a–b, 27/31a–b, 28/29a–b, 60/34a–b.

168 *BLJZL*, 1:214–18; Tian Duoji et al.'s confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:48–50; *XFFL*, 19/30a–b, 21/3a–7a, 22/36a–41b.

169 The other leaders in the Taiping uprisings included Long Shaozhou and Wang Guoxian. *XFFL*, 26/8b–9b, 27/4a–10b, 40/13a.

170 After the local authorities suppressed the sectarian unrest in various locations in Shaanxi, they required sectarians to sign warranties with the local *yamen*, repenting of their participation and promising never to do it again. GZDJQ, 2077.

171 GZDJQ, 1336, 1612; *XFFL*, 20/12a, 21/1a–3a, 21/14a–17b, 21/30a–33b.

172 GZDJQ, 1507.

173 GZDJQ, 1548.

174 GZDJQ, 1613.

175 Yimian deferred Qianlong's order to go to Shaanxi's border with Henan and insisted on finishing the fight at Wuzuoyun. GZDJQ, 1654, 1538.

176 *XFFL*, 28/30b–36a.

177 *KJJFSB*, 1/9b–10a.

178 *KJJFSB*, 1/7b–8a.

179 A Sichuan native, Yuan Guohuang participated in several wars in the late Qianlong era and had two of his portraits on display at the Purple Light Pavilion (Ziguangge) in Beijing. *QSG*, 11242–43. Also from Sichuan, He Yuanqing was promoted to be regional commander for his contribution in the conquering the rebels' stronghold at Laifeng's Qiguzhai. *QSG*, 11242.

180 On 01/12/19 Guancheng and five hundred troops arrived in Sichuan's Liangshan. *XFFL*, 23/8a–11a, 23/12a–15b, 25/30b.

181 *XFFL*, 26/8b; *JQSYD*, 8:491; *KJJFSB*, 1/10a–b. Fozhu's forebear was a sinicized Manchu and military official of the Ming dynasty who had surrendered to the Manchus. *QSG*, 9329–32, 11248; Crossley, *Translucent Mirror*, 112–13, 121–22.

182 GZDJQ, 846, 1797, 1877; *XFFL*, 26/8b–9b, 28/27b–30a.

183 GZDJQ, 1938, 2013; *XFFL*, 29/19b–26a.

184 GZDJQ, 2294, 2077.

185 *XFFL*, 29/4b–6a, 29/10b–12a, 29/24b–26a. Qianlong first ordered Mingliang, Eldemboo, and Delengtai to Sichuan but then decided to send all three generals to the Xiangyang theater when he learned that Huiling and his colleagues had not been effective. On hearing the fall of Dongxiang, he changed his mind again; he let Mingliang and Delengtai head to Sichuan and had Eldemboo go to Xiangyang. *XFFL*, 26/10a–12a, 26/26a–27b, 28/11a–b.

186 Mingliang, Yimian, and Delengtai, 02/03/26, GZDJQ, 2200. *XFFL*, 31/16b–20b, 32/10b–16b.

187 The memorial with Mingliang's name listed first is GZDJQ, 2200. Yimian's plea was on 02/04/10. GZDJQ, 2290; *XFFL*, 32/19a–20a, 33/44a–b, 35/26b, 35/29a–b.
188 GZDJQ, 2294; *XFFL*, 35/21a–26a.
189 GZDJQ, 2343; *XFFL*, 36/31a–36a.
190 *XFFL*, 37/24b–27b.
191 GZDJQ, 2382, 2437; *XFFL*, 37/20b–23b.
192 This rebel chief, Zheng Wenli, was caught by the Qing forces. GZDJQ, 2472; *XFFL*, 39/9a–12b.
193 GZDJQ, 2438; *XFFL*, 35/43a–44b, 38/26b–30a.
194 Yimian, Mingliang, Delengtai, et al., 02/06/01, GZDJQ, 2563; *XFFL*, 40/27a–31a.
195 Xijintai was also an honoree of the Purple Light Pavilion. He had been promoted to banner vice commander-in-chief and palace guardsman of the first grade during the Miao campaign. *QSG*, 11248–49.
196 GZDJQ, 2595; *XFFL*, 41/9a–14a, 41/30a, 42/5a–b.
197 GZDJQ, 2472.
198 *XFFL*, 89/19b–20a.
199 *XFFL*, 35/32a, 39/15b–17a.
200 The Xiangyang rebels used Wanli, or "ten thousand profits," as their reign name.
201 *XFFL*, 172/32b.
202 Tan Zhengqi et al.'s confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:17.
203 Some of the titles were the same as used in Wang Lun's uprising in Shandong in 1774. Naquin, *Shantung Rebellion*, 111–14.
204 In Dangyang, the rebels fired only lead pieces, iron nails, and pebbles from their primitive guns, causing merely minor injuries to their enemies. *XFFL*, 4/8a–b. Some rebels even bowed to Qing soldiers who were firing at them since they believed their religious magic would conquer gunfire. *XFFL*, 4/3b–4a; *QSLJQ*, 2/18b–19a.
205 Suzuki has noted this in *Shinchō chūkishi*, 148.
206 *XFFL*, 26/16b–17a.
207 *XFFL*, 1/11a–b, 3/7b, 63/25a–28b.
208 *XFFL*, 67/4a. The rebels in the late Ming tattooed their insignia on the faces of captured civilians. Parsons, *Peasant Rebellions*, 230. So did the Taiping rebels. Meyer-Fong, *What Remains*, 73–81.
209 Parsons, *Peasant Rebellions*, 232.
210 *XFFL*, 9/9b–10a, 51/26a–27b, 57/24a–b.
211 *XFFL*, 1/4a. Qianlong also called them "ragtags." *QSLJQ*, 2/a–b; *XFFL*, 20/19a.
212 When Sun Shiyi captured some rebel chiefs after he took their forts at Xiaoyou, he reported that he would cut them into pieces to feed dogs. *BLJZL*, 5:85.
213 Huiling massacred nearly 2,500 captives including women, who were said to had fought against the Qing troops, out of 2,749 people captured after the Qing forces broke the rebel stronghold at Zhijiang's Guanwannao. GZDJQ, 1399. A similar massacre occurred in late 1796 at Kaixian's Huangbaipeng. *XFFL*, 22/2b.
214 GZDJQ, 2077.
215 *QSLJQ*, 3/2b–3a; *XFFL*, 3/5b–6a, 8/11b–12b, 9/12b–13a, 18/28a–29b.
216 *QSLJQ*, 3/8b; *XFFL*, 4/12a–14a, 4/16a.
217 After the Xiaogan uprising was put down, Zu Zhiwang obliged the local militias to hunt down sectarians and bring them to the authorities. But Qianlong warned against it and ordered Zu to closely monitor them instead. *XFFL*, 13/43/b–45b. In the late summer of 1796, after the Xiangyang rebels

were removed from Henan's borders, most residents returned to their homes in Henan's border areas. Some sectarians were brought to the local yamen by their fellow villagers, even though some of them had not joined the uprising. Jing'an reported that he would send those sectarians whom their fellow villagers did not want to tolerate to Xinjiang or Jilin to be bannermen's slaves. He said that he did so in accordance with an edict he received earlier. *XFFL*, 13/47a–52b.

218 On 01/01/17, Qianlong first granted a one-month stipend to all the troops after Bi Yuan and Huiling reported a "victory" in Zhijiang; *XFFL* 1/16b–17a. After Huiling led his troops to Liangshan to fight against a dispatch from the Lin-Tan group, Qianlong awarded all the troops a one-month stipend before they achieved anything; GZDJQ, 1157. After Yimian's victory in Taiping, Qianlong granted two-month stipends to the soldiers who spearheaded the taking of rebel forts and one-month stipends to all other soldiers; GZDJQ, 2014. When Nie Jieren surrendered, Qianlong ordered another one-month stipend to both Manchu and Green Standard soldiers; *XFFL*, 2/22a. For more such rewards, see *XFFL*, 2/5b–6a, 8/7a, 13/1b, 13/10a, 14/7a, 14/21a, 15/10a–b, 15/41a–b, 16/18a, 21/43b–44b, 23/32b–33a, 27/20b. When Dangyang was lost to the rebels, Qianlong granted a one-month stipend to both the Manchu and Green Standard troops deployed to besiege Dangyang. *XFFL*, 2/5b–6a.

219 *XFFL*, 6/11b–12a.

2. QUAGMIRE, 1797–1798

Epigraph: *XFFL*, 84/25a.

1 GZDJQ, 1815, 1831.

2 *XFFL*, 26/29b–34a, 27/10b–14b, 30/32a–b.

3 *XFFL*, 26/21b–22b, 26/34a–36a, 27/14, 30/32a–35a.

4 Jing'an was rewarded with the noble rank of earl and a double-eyed colored feather. *XFFL*, 28/24b–27b, 28/36b, 28/37b.

5 Zhang Shihu's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:154.

6 *XFFL*, 28/9a–b.

7 Rowe, *Crimson Rain*, 198–99.

8 *XFFL*, 31/4b–5a, 34/12a–13a; Xu Zengzhong, "Shilun pingjia Wang Conger."

9 Hengšui, Shuoyunbao, and Fucheng pursued Yao Zhifu's group; Jing'an and Wang Wenxiong followed Wang Tingzhao's group; Qingcheng and Baketanbu were after Li Shu's group. *XFFL*, 33/5a–b. For the rebels' movements in Henan, see *XFFL*, 31/12b–16a, 32/5a–7a, 33/29a–32b, 34/9b.

10 *XFFL*, 141/1a–2b.

11 *XFFL*, 25/1a–5a, 26/12a–18a, 26/20a–21b.

12 The Qing source stated that the merged Xiangyang force had four thousand people, who were joined by five to six thousand local sectarians in Shangnan. *XFFL*, 35/2a.

13 *XFFL*, 34/36a–37b, 35/2b, 35/4a–b, 35/6a–9b, 36/22a–24b.

14 It thrust northward before it turned southwestward to Xichuan. *XFFL*, 34/6b–8a, 34/12a–13a.

15 *XFFL*, 35/15b.

16 The Qing source estimated that a total of ten thousand people joined the Xiangyang rebels in southern Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 35/32b–33b, 36/2a, 36/12b, 36/13a–b, 36/16b, 37/17a–b, 39/20b–21b.

17 Gao Junde's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:83.

18 *XFFL*, 33/33a–34b.

19 *XFFL*, 36/8b–10a.

20 *XFFL*, 34/28a–30a, 34/32a–34b. Shortly after, Qianlong again scolded his generals for being always slow and late, and allowing their enemies to go wherever they desired. *XFFL*, 35/12b–13a.
21 *XFFL*, 35/16b–19a. Song Shu was an investigating censor for the metropolitan circuit.
22 *XFFL*, 35/20a–21a.
23 *XFFL*, 36/29a.
24 *XFFL*, 38/10a–17a.
25 GZDJQ, 2290, 2475; *BLJZL*, 1:258–59.
26 *XFFL*, 39/19a. The Salar were Sunni Muslims who migrated to Gansu during the Yuan dynasty. Intermarried with the Tibetans and others, their population reached ten thousand by mid-Ming. During the Yongzheng period, their two chieftains were incorporated into the Qing administrative system, but they kept their own soldiers. *Xunhua tingzhi*, 5/28–38.
27 *XFFL*, 38/44a–45a.
28 *XFFL*, *j*. 38–40 passim, 43/8a–9b; *BLJZL*, 1:258–61, 263–65.
29 *XFFL*, 39/27a–32b, 40/6b–9a.
30 GZDJQ, 2564; *XFFL*, 40/6a–8a, 42/1a–3a, 43/1a–3a; *Daning xianzhi*, 5/7b–8b.
31 GZDJQ, 2597; *XFFL*, 41/14a–15a.
32 *XFFL*, 41/27b–28b.
33 Yimian sent Zhu Shedou, the regional commander of Chuanbei, and two thousand troops to Taiping and directed the long-awaited Salar Muslim soldiers to Taiping—they arrived in Xixiang in several batches only after all the rebels had crossed the Han River. GZDJQ, 2563; *XFFL*, 41/4a–b, 41/29a–34a.
34 *XFFL*, 42/15a–20b.
35 Wang Sanhuai's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:70–71. According to another Dazhou leader, their meeting occurred at Bamamiao. Fu Yueming's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:81.
36 *XFFL*, 74/36a–b; *BLJZL*, 5:70.
37 *XFFL*, 55/25a.
38 *XFFL*, 42/4a–7a.
39 *XFFL*, *j*. 43–44, 51–52 passim, 45/8a; *Fengjie xianzhi*, 22/4a. Gong Wenyu led the survivors and joined the Dazhou rebels; this group was later known as the Thread Band (Xianhao).
40 *XFFL*, 48/16b, 63/24b–15a.
41 Wang Sanhuai's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:66, 70–71; *Daning xianzhi*, 5/8a–b.
42 *XFFL*, 43/3a–6b, 43/18a–25b, 46/17a–23b, 48/3a–6b.
43 GZDJQ, 3203.
44 *XFFL*, 43/6b, 49/18b–23a, 51/9b–12a, 52/12a–b, 53/1a–5a, 92/23b–25a.
45 Legend said that a letter from Zhu Shedou to the magistrate of Tongjiang was intercepted by the rebels. Thus, they disguised themselves as Qing troops and used the letter to lure the troops and militiamen in the city out and then attacked them, which led to the fall of Tongjiang city. *KJJFSB*, 2/9a–b.
46 *XFFL*, 55/28a–b, 57/24a.
47 *XFFL*, 54/16b–17a, 56/11a–b, 56/15a.
48 *XFFL*, *j*. 54–56 passim, 58/17b–20b.
49 *KJJFSB*, 2/8b–9a.
50 In discussing the rebels' guerrilla warfare, Yimian stated: "The bandits are treacherous and scattered, difficult to round up. If the official troops intercept them head on, they split and go in different directions. If the official troops follow them and chase them, they run straight ahead once they spot their enemies. [Our] soldiers have become exhausted from the long campaign, but the bandits have become numerous because they have kidnaped [civilians]."

XFFL, 51/13a–b.

51 In the seventh month, Yimian deployed to Sichuan 2,500 Green Standard troops from Gansu's Suzhou and Hezhou, 500 Salar soldiers, and requested 1,500 soldiers from Shandong. *XFFL*, 45/19b–20a, 46/11a.

52 Yimian also requested that fourteen middle- and lower-ranking officers be sent to Sichuan to lead the troops who had stayed in their own garrisons, since most officers in Sichuan had been deployed. *XFFL*, 54/21a–23a.

53 *XFFL*, 50/32b.

54 In the same edict, Qianlong charged Mingliang and Delengtai with the task of eliminating the Yao-Wang force. *QSLJQ*, 23/16a–b.

55 *Zhuan'gao*, 1077 (1), 6752 (1–3); *QSG*, 11139–46.

56 *QSLQL*, 1478/16a.

57 See chapter 3.

58 *QSLJQ*, 22/13b.

59 *XFFL*, 35/19b–20a. Hailanca was a leading general in the late Qianlong period. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese*, 273–74.

60 After the Manchu conquest of China, Kangxi was the only emperor who led wars in person, and it was rare for the members of the imperial family to lead a campaign. Only Yinti, the Kangxi emperor's fourteenth son, was appointed as commander-in-chief of the Zunghar campaign in the late Kangxi period.

61 Those included Ortai, Necin, Fuheng, Agūi, and Hešen.

62 Those included Yue Zhongqi, Yang Yingju, Sun Shiyi, Ohūi, Helin, and Fuk'anggan.

63 *JQSYD*, 4:501–3

64 Wei Xiumei, *Qingji zhiguan*, 355–80.

65 Lebao was adroit in cultivating personal relationships, trying to make friends with both superiors and inferiors. Zhaolian, *Xiaoting zalu*, 419.

66 *JQSYD*, 2:243; *QSG*, 10745.

67 *JQSYD*, 2:151.

68 *XFFL*, 56/25b–26a, 57/16b–17a.

69 *XFFL*, 58/26a–b.

70 *XFFL*, 58/30b–31a.

71 *XFFL*, 59/1a–2b, 59/12a–13a. When he sent Lebao to Sichuan, Qianlong assumed that he was already on his way to Hubei, so he ordered Lebao either to take Eldemboo with him or to secure one to two thousand troops from Eldemboo if the latter had not finished fighting the Changyang rebels. *XFFL*, 54/35b–36a. But Lebao had not left Guizhou when his new appointment arrived.

72 *XFFL*, 203/25b–26a.

73 *XFFL*, 59/30b–31a.

74 *XFFL*, 59/31a–32b.

75 *XFFL*, 59/37b.

76 *XFFL*, 60/14a–16a, 63/25a–28b.

77 *XFFL*, 58/29b–27b, 59/14b–16b, 60/4a–6b.

78 *KJJFSB*, 2/11a.

79 *XFFL*, 63/24a–25a. Shuliang had reported in the late twelfth month that there were about twenty thousand rebels at the Baiyanshan stronghold. *XFFL*, 59/16b–17a. His figure may be an exaggerated one.

80 Fu Yueming's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:81, Ran Tianyuan's confession, p. 90.

81 *XFFL*, 61/6a–8a.

82 *XFFL*, 60/29b–30a, 61/12a–15a.

83 *XFFL*, 61/15a–18a, 61/22a–25a. It is likely that Lebao had written to Eldemboo and Funing and urged them to make the plea to the throne.

84 *XFFL*, 61/25a–b.
85 *MQDA*, A283–23.
86 *XFFL*, 61/5a.
87 *XFFL*, 62/26a–31b, 63/12b–13a.
88 *XFFL*, 62/31b–33a. Yimian, along with one thousand Shaanxi troops, left Dazhou on 03/02/07 after delivering all logistical affairs to Funing. *XFFL*, 64/28b–29b, 65/38a–b.
89 *XFFL*, 54//36a–b, 59/37b.
90 But Qianlong ordered that both stay at the front and be demoted to soldiers, and that their properties be confiscated. *XFFL*, 63/24a–25a, 63/31b–32a, 63/33b–34a.
91 *XFFL*, 66/29b–37b, 67/18a–23b.
92 *XFFL*, 65/24b–29a, 66/37b–39a, 66/41a, 66/43a, 68/32b–33b.
93 *XFFL*, 65/8a–11a.
94 *XFFL*, 67/39b.
95 *XFFL*, 69/22b.
96 *XFFL*, 34/25a–28a, 38/6a–10a.
97 *XFFL*, *j*. 42–44 passim.
98 *XFFL*, *j*. 45, 48, 49 passim.
99 *XFFL*, *j*. 50, 52–54 passim.
100 *XFFL*, 59/5b–8b.
101 *XFFL*, 61/27b–28b.
102 *XFFL*, *j*. 55–59 passim. Funing was deprived of his palace rank and feather trappings. Eldemboo's noble rank, earl of the second grade, was demoted to the third grade, and his feather trappings were downgraded as well. *XFFL*, 61/29b–30a.
103 *XFFL*, 61/15a–18a, 61/25b–27b.
104 Tan and Zhang were escorted to Beijing and were executed by "a thousand cuts." All the other captives were slaughtered by Eldemboo's troops. *XFFL*, 62/1a–4b.
105 *XFFL*, 44/19b–24a, 44/34b–35a, 62/4b–8a.
106 *XFFL*, 45/4b–6a, 45/8a–9b, 47/22b–25b.
107 *XFFL*, 44/10a–11a, 45/15a–b, 46/2a–b.
108 *XFFL*, 45/10b, 47/1a–4b, 47/9b.
109 All the bannermen from Jilin arrived in Xiangyang on 02/09/03. *XFFL*, 50/10a.
110 Their numbers had shrunk to perhaps eleven to thirteen thousand. *XFFL*, 32b–33b, *j*. 45–47and 48 passim, 54/14b–15a.
111 *XFFL*, 50/4a–9b.
112 *XFFL*, 49/4a–11a.
113 Huilun's corpse was sent back to Beijing. Qianlong granted 3,000 taels for his funeral and let his son inherit his dukedom. *XFFL*, 50/18a–b. Huilun was Mingšui's nephew biologically and was adopted by Mingšui since the latter was sonless. On Mingšui's death, see Dai "Disguised Defeat," 158–60.
114 Only a few counties, including Baokang, Fangxian, Zhushan, and Zhuxi, and a few cities, such as Xingshan, Yuan'an, and Nanzhang, suffered serious destruction. *XFFL*, 51/21a–25a, 52/14b–16b.
115 The reinforcements to Hanzhong included 4,000 troops led by Hengšui and Qingcheng, and 2,000 troops led by Ingšan from Sichuan. Ingšan also deployed 1,000 troops from Gansu. *XFFL*, *j*. 50, 53 passim, and 54/14b–15a.
116 *XFFL*, 54/4b–6a, 54/7b–8a.
117 *XFFL*, 52/7b–11a and *j*. 54 passim.
118 *XFFL*, 56/5a–10a, 56/16b–20a, 57/12b–13a.

119 *XFFL*, 57/6b, 57/6b–12a, 58/15a–16b, 64/13b.
120 In his mid-thirties, Gao Junde was from a sectarian family in Xiangyang. Gao was arrested on 01/03/10 because he sheltered a sectarian teacher in his home. In the sixth month of 1796, Yongbao sent Gao to the Xiangyang rebels to persuade his uncle, Gao Chengjie, to surrender. But Gao Junde chose to stay with the rebels. *XFFL*, 182/26a–27b; Gao Junde's confessions, BLJZL, 5:82–89.
121 *XFFL*, *j*. 58–59 passim, 60/1a–3b.
122 They included 500 Shanxi soldiers stationed at Ningqiang, 300 Manchu soldiers from the Jingzhou garrison at Mianxian, another 500 Manchu soldiers from Jingzhou as well as local soldiers and militiamen in Hanzhong, and Ke Fan's and Aixing'a's 4,000 soldiers patrolling the riverbank and the border with Sichuan. Mingliang also asked Huiling to go to Xixiang from Taiping. *XFFL*, 60/21b–24a.
123 *XFFL*, 60/26a–32b.
124 *XFFL*, 61/1a–6a, 61/12a–13b.
125 *XFFL*, 60/24b, 61/1a–2b.
126 *XFFL*, *j*. 60–62 passim, 64/8b–15.
127 On 03/01/14, Qianlong received Jing'an's report that another rebel group of five to six thousand including hundreds of horse-riding women had crossed the Han River at Nanzheng. *XFFL*, 60/26a–30a. Then Qin Cheng'en reported that the rebels' rear group had crossed the river on 03/01/27 at Shiquan. *XFFL*, 64/1a–2a.
128 *XFFL*, 64/19b–23a, 64/33b–34b, 65/21a–22a.
129 Ke Fan was deprived of his hat trappings and demoted to acting provincial commander, among other demotions. *XFFL*, 62/14b–16a, 64/12b, 64/27b–28b.
130 *XFFL*, 65/16b–20a, *j*. 66 passim, 67/1a–3b.
131 *XFFL*, *j*. 64–65 passim.
132 Eldemboo was first ordered to Sichuan, but he was redirected to Shaanxi after he reached eastern Sichuan. *XFFL*, 64/18a–19b, 64/29b–30a, 65/31b–33a.
133 *XFFL*, 61/21b–22a, 61/24b–25a.
134 *XFFL*, 66/9a–11b, 66/15a–18b.
135 Wang Conger was also identified because her hair was not long (she had shaved it when she stayed in the nunnery in 1794), and she wore embroidered clothes and gold earrings. Yao's and Wang's corpses were sliced after their heads were cut off for display first in Xiangyang and then in the places they passed in Sichuan and Shaanxi before the heads were sent to Beijing. GZDJQ, 3786; *BLJZL*, 1:323–37; *XFFL*, 67/9a–15b, 175/12b–13a; McCaffrey, "Living through Rebellion," 202–12.
136 *XFFL*, 67/16a–18a, 67/41b.
137 *XFFL*, 67/25a–b.
138 *XFFL*, 67/30b–35a, 68/18a–21b, 69/1a–3b, 71/24b–27b; GZDJQ, 3895.
139 *XFFL*, 71/1a–5b, 72/13a–16b, 72/27a–28b.
140 *XFFL*, 72/20a.
141 *XFFL*, 73/1a–52, 73/9a, 73/ 10a–11b, 73/34b–38b.
142 Kuilun reported this to the throne in the ninth month of 1799, when he passed through this area. *XFFL*, 124/6a–b.
143 *XFFL*, 124/6b–7a.
144 *XFFL*, 66/41b–42b, 67/27b–29a, 68/1b–5b, 68/22a–23b, 69/8b–13b; GZDJQ, 3923.
145 *XFFL*, *j*. 70–73 passim.
146 *XFFL*, 74/20b–22b, 74/26b–29a, 75/8a–11a, 75/13a–15a; GZDJQ, 4055.
147 GZDJQ, 4081, 4125.
148 Thinking that he might never be able to return to Xiangyang, Zhang was once

brought to tears and tried to hang himself, but he was stopped by his followers. *XFFL*, 83/12a; Li Chao's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:80.

149 *XFFL*, *j*. 77–79 passim and *j*. 82; *Daning xianzhi*, 5/9b. In the autumn Eldemboo briefly rejoined Mingliang before heading to Guangyuan to tackle Gao Junde. *XFFL*, 79/12b–14a.

150 *XFFL*, 78/16b–17a.

151 *XFFL*, *j*. 85–86 passim.

152 *XFFL*, 115/40a–b, 124/6b–7a.

153 *XFFL*, 60/35a–38b, 70/24b–27b.

154 *XFFL*, 57/26b–31b, 59/5a, 66/26a–b, 68/15b–16a; *Daning xianzhi*, 5/7b–9a.

155 *XFFL*, 72/32b–36a.

156 *XFFL*, 73/15b–16a, 73/24b–25a, 74/9a–11a. Lin Lianggong's whereabouts afterward had remained unclear. But Lebao listed him as dying of illness in late 1796. Lebao, *Pingding jiaofei*, 56b.

157 *XFFL*, 73/5a–8b; Luo Qiqing's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:74. Wang Sanhuai's confession, pp. 66–67.

158 *XFFL*, 72/29a–32b.

159 *XFFL*, 71/16b–20b, 73/22b, 75/1a–5a.

160 *XFFL*, 73/18a–19a, 74/7b–16a.

161 Gao Junde's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:83. Li Huai's confession, p. 79.

162 *XFFL*, 74/3b–5a, 74/30b–35b, 75/24b, 76/30a–35b.

163 Wang Sanhuai's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:67, 71.

164 *XFFL*, 74/23b–26b, 75/32b–35a, 76/6b–8a, 77/1a–2b.

165 Magistrate of Nanchong when the war started, Liu Qing was promoted to prefect earlier in 1798 at Qianlong's suggestion. *XFFL*, 68/15b–16a, 71/21b–22b, 71/24b. Apparently, Lebao had placed Liu under his patronage.

166 *XFFL*, 76/14a–18b, 76/21b–22a, 76/23b–24a. In his memoir, Lebao claimed that he had "caught Wang Sanhuai alive." Lebao, *Pingding jiaofei*, 19b.

167 Lebao, 03/07/25, *BLJZL*, 1:348–49. *XFFL*, 77/23b–26b. Lebao, 03/08/06, *BLJZL*, 1:356.

168 *QLQJZ*, 42:530–31.

169 *XFFL*, 77/30a–b.

170 *XFFL*, 77/30b–32a.

171 *XFFL*, 79/26a, 79/30a–b.

172 *XFFL*, 77/15b–21b.

173 *XFFL*, 78/6b–7a, 78/18a–25b, 79/14a–20a.

174 Gao Junde's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:85–89.

175 *XFFL*, *j*. 81–86 passim.

176 *XFFL*, 78/29b–30a, 80/1a–b, 81/9a–11a.

177 *XFFL*, 80/17a–b.

178 *XFFL*, 78/3b–7a, 79/5a–9a, 79/22a–24b, 82/1a–4b, 84/13b–14b, 87/19a–22a, 94/20a.

179 *XFFL*, 86/24b–26b, 87/1a–5a, 87/25b–30b.

180 In the second month of 1799, thousands of the rebels tried to penetrate Ningqiang from Sichuan. Jiaqing thought that they were Ran Wenchou's remnants. *XFFL*, 91/20b–21a. Later in the year, Jiaqing said again that Huiling had failed to exterminate the Ran group but only caught its chief for rewards. *XFFL*, 106/14a–b.

181 *XFFL*, 90/15a–b.

182 *XFFL*, 83/5a.

183 *XFFL*, *j*. 82–86 passim.

184 *XFFL*, 79/8a–9a, 79/24a–b, 82/4b–6b.

185 *XFFL*, *j*. 84–86 passim.

186 As he stated on 03/08/09: "I have been tutoring the emperor since the year before last when [Jiaqing] was granted the seal, and I have not taken any leave and rest. The sectarian bandits have not been pacified for years, so that I endeavor day and night. Fortunately, I am still in good spirits, able to give instructions in all campaign matters whenever they surface." *XFFL*, 77/28b. Also see *XFFL*, 87/10a–11a.

187 In late 1796, Qianlong complained about a map of Huangbaishan submitted by Chengde and obliged him to redo it with colorful slips attached to illustrate the information on the map. *XFFL*, 20/32a–b.

188 For example, Qianlong questioned how Ke Fan and his one hundred troops could have killed more than four hundred insurgents and captured scores in a battle in the spring of 1796. *XFFL*, 6/8a–9b, 6/11b–12a. In early 1798, he challenged Guancheng's claim that the rebels at Laomuyuan had resorted to cannibalism and eaten tree bark and grass roots, questioning how those measures could have sustained them for so long a time. *XFFL*, 60/39a–b. Once he wondered why the troops could not handle the roads that had been walked so freely by the rebels, including women. *XFFL*, 60/9a. In the autumn of 1798, he ridiculed Huiling's use of rain as an excuse for the slow progress at Jishan, asking why the rebels had not been hampered by it. *XFFL*, 80/6b. Also see *XFFL*, 18/22a–b, 36/39b–43a, 37/1a–3a.

189 *XFFL*, 52/20b, 60/32a, 65/11b–12, 67/2a.

190 Jiaqing admitted later that Qianlong's mental state drastically deteriorated in late 1798 so that he could not direct the campaign as carefully as before. *XFFLXB*, 352/7b–8a.

191 *XFFL*, 83/10a–b.

192 *XFFL*, 84/25a.

193 *XFFL*, 86/34a–35a.

3. REFORM, 1799

Epigraph: Remarks by Jiaqing on 04/07/06, *XFFL*, 108/40a.

1 *JQSYD*, 4:3.

2 He was Yijiang'a, Shandong's governor. Outraged, Jiaqing dismissed him from his post and exiled him to Ili. *JQQJZ*, 4:28, 62.

3 *QSLJQ*, 37/6b.

4 *QSLJQ*, 37/18b–19b.

5 *QSLJQ*, 37/22b–23a.

6 *QSLJQ*, 37/32a–36a.

7 *XFFL*, 88/4a. For similar statements, see *QSLJQ*, 38/3a–b, *JQSYD*, 4:16.

8 *QSG*, 11316.

9 *XFFL*, 77/29a.

10 This issue has been overlooked in previous scholarship. Bartlett maintains that it was Hešen's monopoly of political power and his corruption that sealed his downfall but does not mention the White Lotus campaign. *Monarchs and Ministers*, 232–39. Nor do Mann and Kuhn note it in "Dynastic Decline"; see p. 108.

11 Feng disputes the exaggeration of his property in *Heshen pingzhuan*, 269–314.
12 *JQSYD*, 4:33–34. Jiaqing did criticize Hešen for exacting bribes from officials so that the officials turned to ordinary people for extra income. *XFFL*, 88/7a–b.
13 However, Hešen could breach the rules when he saw the necessity. In 1797, he endorsed paying for the tents used by the military laborers when they transported cannons and equipment from Guangxi to Guizhou for the Miao campaign even though it was not sanctioned in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute*. Jiaobudang, 02/09/??, 27–30.
14 *XFFL*, 103/8a-9a, 14b. The key issues regarded "long-term porters" (*changfu*) and "long-term mules" (*changluo*). See chapter 7 on these expenditures.
15 *MQDA*, A288-1.
16 Jiaqing repeatedly said that war leaders had spent funds abusively because they counted on Hešen to protect them. *XFFL*, 90/18b-19a, 91/25a. 116/11b.
17 *XFFL*, 89/14a–b.
18 *XFFL*, 103/8a-11b. Oboi was purged in 1669 on Kangxi's taking the reins of government. Nian Gengyao was purged in 1726 as Sichuan's governor-general. Necin was executed in 1749 en route to Jinchuan because the war had already ended.
19 Jiaqing ordered Fuchang'an to witness Hešen's suicide. *QSLJQ*, 37/50b–51b; 38/2b–5a.
20 After his enthronement, Qianlong quickly sidelined Ortai and Zhang Tingyu, the two trusted courtiers of his father.
21 *JQSYD*, 4:33–34.
22 Jiaqing retired or demoted a few of Hešen's protégés, punished several of his household managers, and repudiated Helin, Hešen's deceased younger brother. *QSLJQ*, 38/5a–7a; Nivison, "Ho-shen and His Accusers," 241; Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, 254–55.
23 *QSLJQ*, 37/27b–28b, 37/30b–31a. Songyun was the imperial commissioner at Küriye in charge of border trade with Russia from 1785 to 1792. In 1793, he participated in receiving the Macartney Embassy. For Songyun's time and achievements in Lhasa, see Dabringhaus, *Qing-Imperium*.
24 A Manchu bannerman, Šulin started his career as a military leader but shifted to the civil bureaucracy. When Hešen fell, Šulin was in exile in Xinjiang. *QSG*, 11125–27. On 04/03/05, Jiaqing switched the positions of Šulin and Kuilun. *QSLJQ*, 40/10a–b, 40/16b.
25 *QSLJQ*, 37/27b–28a, 39/5b–6a, 53/22a–b.
26 Zhu Gui was summoned to Beijing on 04/01/03 and appointed to serve in the Southern Study. *JQQJZ*, 4:9; Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, 219–22. Hešen had obstructed Zhu's return to Beijing in 1797. Nivison, "Ho-shen and His Accusers," 240.
27 *XFFL*, 87/22a–b.
28 *XFFL*, 87/22b–23a.
29 *QSLJQ*, 37/28b–29b.
30 Jiaqing thought Mingliang's motive was to claim more funds. Threatening him with severe punishment, he instructed Mingliang to quickly wipe out Zhang's band. *QSLJQ*, 38/10b.
31 *QSLJQ*, 38/14a–15b; 88/17b–18b. Yongbao was promoted to guardsman of the first grade. *XFFL*, 88/25a.
32 *XFFL*, 89/5a–10b.
33 *XFFL*, 89/ 9b.
34 *XFFL*, 89/14a–b; *QSLJQ*, 38/34a–b; 39/6b–7b.
35 *XFFL*, 35/35b, 46/11b–12b, 56/24b–25b.
36 *XFFL*, 23/6b–7a. Qin Cheng'en had warned his troops not to kill all captives with faces tattooed with the characters "Bailianjiao." He screened all the

surrendered and captured, and killed the "true" rebels and sent home the coerced civilians. *XFFL*, 67/4a–5a, 45/18a. While in Sichuan, Yimian entrusted Gong Jinghan, who was on his staff, with screening the captives. Gong executed those who had joined in killing and burning willingly, and released most coerced civilians. *XFFL*, 63/9a–10a.

37 In one example that illustrates the excessive cruelty, Eldemboo executed both Lin Zhihua's wife and their nine-year-old daughter by "a thousand cuts." *XFFL*, 52/3b–4a.

38 *QSG*, 11317.

39 Wang might have fabricated the claim to save his own life: he said that they would be encouraged to surrender were Wang allowed to live. Wang's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:65–68, 68–72, 73–74; *XFFL*, 81/20a–21b. A few rebel chiefs did use the catchword *guanbiminfan* as the reason for their rebellion during their interrogations. Tan Jiayao and Zhang Zhengmo's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:63; Zhang Zhengchao's confession, pp. 62–64.

40 *JQQJZ*, 4:60–61. Wang Sanhuai was executed by "a thousand cuts" along with Luo Qiqing and Luo Qishu in the second month. *JQQJZ*, 4:91.

41 *QSLJQ*, 38/16a–18a; *XFFL*, 86/6a–9a, 87/6b–7a, 89/2b–4a; Nivison, "Ho-shen and His Accusers," 216–17.

42 *JQQJZ*, 4:80–81; *QSLJQ*, 38/23a–b; *XFFL*, *j*. 88–89, 92–94 passim. Meanwhile, Jiaqing was unequivocal that no rebel chiefs should be pardoned and that they should be executed on site so that it made an impact on the other rebels. *XFFL*, 91/25b–26a.

43 *XFFL*, 90/20a–22a, 92/10b–12b.

44 *XFFL*, 91/17a–18b, 92/29a–b, 94/5a–18a, 95/1a–13a.

45 *QSG*, 11316–17.

46 *JQSYD*, 4:62.

47 Jiaqing had heard about two wicked officials in Dazhou, one being Dai, but he could not recall the other's name. *XFFL*, 93/28b–30a.

48 *JQSYD*, 4:132–35. In fact, Chang joined the siege of Dangyang and was awarded a promotion after the recapture of Dangyang. *XFFL*, 8/35b.

49 GZDJQ, 3422; *XFFL*, 210/15a–19b. For the magistrates' numerous clerks and runners during the Qing dynasty, see Reed, *Talons and Teeth*, especially 122–59.

50 According to Delengtai and Lebao, no captured Dazhou rebels mentioned that they had been exacted by Dai except Li Shihuai, who had given 20 taels to two of Dai's clerks in the autumn of 1796 to get free from trouble. *XFFL*, 210/16a. A couple of rebels from Dazhou mentioned only that there was persecution against sectarians in 1796. Fu Yueming's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:81; Tuo Xiangyao's confession, p. 137. Despite Delengtai and Lebao's defense of Dai, Dai was later exiled to Ili and his offspring barred from officialdom. *XFFL*, 195/15b–17a, 210/15a–19b, 210/25a–26a.

51 They are cited in almost all the few works on the White Lotus War published in the People's Republic of China before the 1980s. Also see Suzuki, *Sennen ōkkuteki*, 306–8.

52 *QSLJQ*, 39/25b–26a.

53 *QSLJQ*, 27/42b.

54 *QSLJQ*, 39/19b–20a.

55 *QSLJQ*, 37/41a–b, 38/29a–b.

56 To reward Gu Jiqi for his contribution of information, Jiaqing promoted Gu to "supervising censor of the office of scrutiny for rites." *QSG*, 11316.

57 Hengšui was ordered to act in Yimian's position before Songyun's appointment. *QSLJQ*, 38/25b–26b, 39/2a. After having met with Yimian, Jiaqing sent him to

serve in Uliastai at his own expense. *JQSYD*, 4:114.

58 *JQSYD*, 4:142.

59 *QSLJQ*, 38/25a–b, 39/13a–b. Qin was later released and his confiscated properties returned to him when it was determined that many of the accusations of wrongdoing were not true. *XFFL*, 90/6a–7a, 102/1a–3a, 102/9a–11a; *JQSYD*, 4:169, 175–76.

60 *QSLJQ*, 41/27b–28a.

61 *XFFL*, 68/15b–16a.

62 *XFFL*, *j*. 96–98, 100–104 passim.

63 *XFFL*, 88/31b, 91/27b–29a, 92/3b–4a, 92/30b–31a; *QSLJQ*, 40/7b–8b.

64 *QSLJQ*, 40/25a–27a; *XFFL*, 93/3a–4a; *JQSYD*, 4:86–87.

65 Wesibu defended Jing'an against the accusation of being a coward and pointed out that Guangfu was short-tempered. Even Guangfu did not agree that Jing'an had tried to avoid fighting. *XFFL*, 96/27b–31b, 101/20b–24b, 110/35b–41a.

66 *QSG*, 11177.

67 *XFFL*, 88/10a–13b, 88/15a–16a, 89/10b–14a, 91/6b–8a, 92/12b–19a.

68 *XFFL*, 89/10a. He defended Besiyang and Zhu Shedou for their slow operations at Fangshanping and then Huiling and Delengtai for not clearing all Ran Wenchou's followers. *XFFL*, 92/23b–26a.

69 *QSLJQ*, 39/7a; *XFFL*, 89/9b–10a, 110/35a–b.

70 Liu Qing was promoted to the position of Zhongzhou's subprefect but with the title of prefect. *XFFL*, 91/8a–9a, 91/11b–12a.

71 *XFFL*, 106/6a–b, 106/11b–12b.

72 *XFFL*, 101/8a–b.

73 *QSLJQ*, 38/15b–16a.

74 *XFFL j*. 92–96 passim, 100/26b–30b; *QSLJQ*, 39/14a–15a.

75 *XFFL*, 102/3a–5a, 103/27b–29a.

76 *XFFL*, 105/8b–11b, 106/24b–27b, 107/1a–2a.

77 *XFFL*, *j*. 88–92 passim.

78 Eldemboo was first granted the rank of baron of the second grade, which was upgraded to the first grade after he exterminated Leng Tianlu's band. He was also excused from paying back a penalty of 10,000 taels of silver for the long delay in wiping out the Lin-Tan force in Hubei. *XFFL*, 93/17a–24b, 94/18a–22b, 94/29a–31a; *QSLJQ*, 41/7b–9b; 41/25b–27a.

79 *XFFL*, 96/1a–5a.

80 *XFFL*, 93/27b–28b, 94/28a.

81 *QSLJQ*, 40/4a. Also see *QSLJQ*, 38/20a–b.

82 *QSLJQ*, 40/4a–5a; *XFFL*, 92/1b–2a.

83 *XFFL*, 96/7b, 96/10b–13a; *QSLJQ*, 44/13b, 44/21b–22a.

84 *XFFL*, 102/23a, 103/1a–8a, 103/12a–13a.

85 *XFFL*, 96/29b–30a, 98/1a–11a, 98/15a, 98/16a, 98/20a, 101/1a–5b, 101/10b–12b, 103/1a–8a.

86 *XFFL*, 99/13a–b.

87 Lebao said that those bannermen were not well trained and disciplined. *XFFL*, 106/7a–b.

88 *XFFL*, 106/7b–15b.

89 *XFFL*, 107/13b–20b.

90 *XFFL*, 107/20b–24b.

91 Guwanghing was subsequently promoted to vice censor-in-chief (*fuduyushi*) from supervising censor. *XFFL*, 91/29b–31a; *QSLJQ*, 407a–b.

92 *XFFL*, 107/23b–24b.

93 *XFFL*, *j*. 96–100, 106–8 passim.

94 *XFFL*, 108/35a–38a.

95 *XFFL*, 108/39b–40a.
96 *XFFL*, 108/38a–41b.
97 Zhu Shedou was granted a hereditary title and his troops a one-month stipend. *XFFL*, 109/1a–3b, 109/8b. In his memoir of the campaign, Lebao listed Bao Zhenghong as one of the insurgent chiefs he eliminated himself. Lebao, *Pingding jiaofei*, 157.
98 Kuilun, accompanied by four palace guardsmen, would first stop in Shaanxi and announce to Mingliang his new appointment before going to Sichuan and dismissing Lebao. *QSLJQ*, 49/2b–4b; *XFFL*, 110/7a–11a, 110/12b–17b.
99 *XFFL*, 110/18a–30b.
100 *XFFL*, 110/ 30b–35b.
101 Delengtai receive Lebao's letter on 04/07/21. He entered Hubei on 04/07/26. *XFFL*, 117/1a–4a.
102 *XFFL*, 113/6b–9b.
103 *XFFL*, *j*. 88–91 passim, 93/11a–16a, 95/25a–32a, 97/22a–26a.
104 *XFFL*, *j*. 87–90 passim, 121/14a–b.
105 *XFFL*, 94/22b–26a, 97/5b–8a.
106 *XFFL*, 95/15b–17a, 99/1a–5b, 99/18a–20a. Guwanghing reported to Jiaqing on Yongbao's being routed in the battle when he returned to Beijing in the eighth month. But Yongbao denied it as well as his conflict with Mingliang. *XFFL*, 116/9a–10a, 120/19a–b, 122/6a–9b.
107 *XFFL*, 100/6a–10a.
108 *XFFL*, 100/14a–16b, 106/22b–23a.
109 *XFFL j*. 102, 104 passim.
110 On one occasion, Zhang's followers suffered from food poisoning. On another occasion, Zhang and his men were drunk and slept in a village. Each time Mingliang was informed of the situation but did not act. At another time, Mingliang deliberately went southward when the rebels went north. *XFFL*, 116/10a–b.
111 *XFFL*, 95/25a–32a, 105/13b, 105/16b–23a; *QSLJQ*, 46/26b–29a.
112 *XFFL*, 109/12a–15b, 109/29b–31a, 109/32b–34b, 118/14b–20b.
113 *XFFL*, 117/20a–21b, 117/24a–41a.
114 *XFFL*, 111/27a–30a, 114/1a–5b, 114/14b–16a.
115 *XFFL*, 111/30a–32b, 114/11b–14b, 115/8b–13b, 115/29a–35a, 116/27b–29b.
116 *XFFL*, 115/40a–b, 116/8b–9a.
117 *XFFL*, 115/40a–43b, 116/10b–13b.
118 Jiaqing also promoted Eldemboo to the rank of banner commander-in-chief and instructed Kuilun to deliver both the seal of grand minister commissioner and a purse, originally granted to Mingliang, to Eldemboo instead. *XFFL*, 116/13b–15b, 116/17b–19a. For Jiaqing's praise of Eldemboo before the appointment, see *XFFL*, 103/15a–b, 114/19a, 116/13a–b. In fact, the reason Eldemboo did not receive Hu Qilun's "gifts" was because Eldemboo did not fight in northern Hubei but had been in southwestern Hubei with Funing; the logistics there were handled by Funing himself.
119 The local authorities arrested many sectarians once informed of Zhang's recruiting plan. *XFFL*, 122/4a–6a, 123/7b–8a.
120 *XFFL*, 116/24a–26a, 117/27a–29a, 120/1a–5b.
121 Wu Xiongguang shared Songyun's view and pleaded that both Yongbao and Mingliang be allowed to stay on the frontline with the investigation postponed until after the war. *XFFL*, 117/20a–21b, 117/24a–26b, 118/14b–16a, 120/15b.
122 *XFFL*, 117/34a–41a; *QSLJQ*, 50/31a. Shortly after, Jiaqing took away the positions given to Yongbao's two sons earlier in the year and terminated Qingcheng's younger brother's service in the imperial palace. *XFFL*, 119/20a–b.

The discussion on Nayancheng in this and the following chapters is partially drawn from Dai, "Broken Passage."

123 *XFFL*, 117/40b–41a, 119/14b–20a.

124 *XFFL*, 77/29a–b.

125 He was first named president of the Hanlin Academy on 04/01/08. *JQSYD*, 4:13. A few days later, on 04/01/21, Nayancheng was appointed minister of works (p. 37). Then he was given another title, that of supervisor of Chongwen Gate customs (p. 40). Next he was ordered to act as minister of war (p. 46). On 04/02/19, Nayancheng was appointed deputy director of the Historiography Institute (p. 59). On 04/05/27, he was named to oversee the palace maintenance office (p. 182). On 04/07/25, he was appointed codirector of the Imperial Household Department, although his position as the president of the Hanlin Academy was taken away (p. 259).

126 Nayancheng was appointed vice commander-in-chief of the Mongol Yellow Banner and commander-in-chief of the Chinese Bordered White Banner. *QSLJQ*, 39/4a; NGDK, 62.

127 *JQSYD*, 4:44.

128 *JQSYD*, 4:158–59.

129 After Necin was purged for his failure to win a quick victory, Qianlong sent Fuheng, a junior grand councilor, to the first Jinchuan war. Fuheng's success in bringing the war to a satisfactory conclusion paved the way for his ascendance as chief grand councilor. In 1781, Hešen was sent to lead the campaign to suppress the Muslim uprising in Gansu. After he failed to score a victory, Agūi was sent there and helped Hešen to victory in the campaign.

130 *XFFL*, 120/20a–b.

131 Taibu was appointed to be Shaanxi's governor shortly after Yongbao's dismissal. *XFFL*, 117/34a–41a; *QSLJQ*, 50/31a.

132 *XFFL*, 121/1a–5a.

133 *QSLJQ*, 52/4a–5a; *XFFL*, 121/5a–9a. The three thousand bannermen were initially sent to Hubei but were redirected to Shaanxi when the crisis in Hubei ended.

134 *XFFL*, 120/1a–5b, 120/12a–13a.

135 *XFFL*, 120/9a–11a.

136 *XFFL*, 122/14b–19b, 123/17a–18b, 135/8b–12a.

137 *XFFL*, 122/1a–4a, 122/9b–13a.

138 Jiaqing also demoted Mingliang's position of commander-in-chief of the Chinese Red Banner to its vice commander-in-chief. *XFFL*, 123/21b–30b.

139 *XFFL*, 125/7a–9a, 127/4a–10b, 128/3b–8b, 131/13b–14a. A veteran rebel from Xiangyang, Li Chao claimed that he had been the de facto leader of Zhang's group after his merger with Zhang Hanchao in 1797. Li Chao's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:79–80.

140 *XFFL*, 127/10b–12b.

141 Jiaqing was especially annoyed because he had endured the searing heat of high summer to read and respond to Mingliang's memorials reporting only fake battles. *XFFL*, 120/5b–9a, 122/1a–4a, 122/6a–13b, 122/19b–20b, 125/1a–7a, 125/17a–21b, 125/23a–b. But he later doubted the truthfulness of Yongbao's accusations, so he told Songyun to interrogate them face to face to decide who had lied. *XFFL*, 127/16a–17b.

142 Jiaqing rewarded some offices and granted a one-month stipend to the soldiers. *XFFL*, 127/13a–16a, 127/17b–18a.

143 *XFFL*, 125/10b–11a, 125/12a–13b, 125/28a–30a, 128/1a–8b, 133/44a–45a.

144 Songyun shielded Mingliang from some of the serious charges from Yongbao, such as entrapping Yongbao by telling him to stay put and fabricating three

battles, and claimed that Yongbao was cowardly and delaying. *XFFL*, 135/1a–14b.

145 *XFFL*, 119/19a, 123/28b–29a.

146 *QSLJQ*, 39/6b–7b; *XFFL*, 87/8a.

147 GZDJQ, 2231; *XFFL*, 33/41b.

148 *XFFL*, 88/19a. Ingšan was sent to Tibet to succeed Songyun as the Qing commissioner there. *QSLJQ*, 38/19a; *JQQJZ*, 4:71.

149 *XFFL*, 90/15a–18b. Shortly after, Funing sent in another memorial in another attempt to clear himself of being responsible for excessive expenditures in Sichuan. *XFFL*, 93/4a–7a.

150 *XFFL*, 90/18b–20a.

151 Zhaolian, *Xiaoting zalu*, 342.

152 Songyun reached Shaanxi on 04/04/25. He then headed to Gansu's Chengxian on 04/05/03 and received the seal of governor-general from Hengšui. *XFFL*, 101/26b.

153 *QSLJQ*, 40/3b.

154 *QSLJQ*, 40/29a–b.

155 After Jing'an left, Jiaqing ordered Lebao to pick a civil official or a banner commander to help Funing for the time being. *XFFL*, 96/29b–31b.

156 *XFFL*, 112/27b–30a; *QSLJQ*, 40/32a–b.

157 *XFFL*, 14/27a, 14/31b.

158 *JQSYD* 3:139, 186–87.

159 *JQSYD*, 4:58–59, 62. Another charge against Hu Qilun was that he fabricated a report in the spring of 1797 that returned rebels in the Xiangyang area were plotting a new uprising. Hu then led troops and militiamen against those alleged rebels and killed and arrested several hundred people. Hu was thus promoted to the rank of provincial judicial commissioner, but it turned out that the people in question were refugees. *XFFL*, 32/29a–35b, 32/38a–39a; *JQSYD*, 4:161–65, 344.

160 Jiaqing criticized Wesibu pointedly for not submitting Hu's account book and warned him not to try to alter or destroy the records. *JQSYD*, 4:185–86.

161 A total of 83,961 taels, as reported later, after Hu was executed. *JQSYD*, 4:347–51, 429. But his account book recorded more than 99,000 taels, and another 50,000 were found in his home on his arrest.

162 Jiaqing ordered that Bi's two sons be deprived of their heritable titles. *JQSYD*, 4:353.

163 *XFFL*, 108/23b.

164 Earlier, Kuilun had sent a memorial on the logistics problems in Sichuan after he had met with Guwanghing in Shaanxi's Qixian. Jiaqing responded by repeating his instruction to thoroughly investigate both Lebao and Funing on his arrival. *XFFL*, 114/23a–27a.

165 *XFFL*, 116/2b–8b.

166 *XFFL*, 116/8b–16a, 123/12a–14a.

167 Jiaqing upgraded Liu's rank to circuit intendant and told Kuilun to appoint Liu to the position once a vacancy occurred in Sichuan. *XFFL*, 115/15b–16a, 116/11b, 116/20b–21b; *JQSYD*, 4:290.

168 For Hong Liangji's life and career, see Jones, "Hung Liang-Chi."

169 The letter is in *Hong Liangji ji*, 223–30. On the incident, see Jones, "Hung Liang-Chi," 156–202, and Elman, *Classicism*, 284–90.

170 Jones, "Hung Liang-Chi," 139–41.

171 *JQSYD*, 4:305–10. As Nivison has pointed out, the way in which Hong tried to communicate with the emperor, by sending copies of his letter to notables in the capital instead of submitting a memorial directly, increased Jiaqing's

uneasiness. Nivison, "Ho-shen and His Accusers," 241–43.
172 *QSG*, 11299.
173 Qianlong mistook Cabina for Kuilun's great-grandfather. *QSLQL*, 1297/15b.
174 *QSG*, 11081–84, 11299–300; *QLSYD*, 18:656–912 passim.
175 Kuilun began acting as governor-general in early 1796 and was officially appointed to the position months after.
176 Jiaqing hacked off 96,000 taels from Kuilun's remaining 186,000 taels debt and allowed Kuilun to pay the remaining 90,000 taels with his allowance but returned his houses to him. *JQSYD*, 4:75–76.
177 Guwanghing had first exposed You's delinquency so that Jiaqing charged Kuilun to investigate him further. In addition to Kuilun's suggested punishment of keeping You in service in Guangyuan without pay, Jiaqing ordered him put in a cangue for three months. *XFFL*, 115/28b–29a, 119/23a–26a.
178 Kuilun had received the seal of governor-general sent by Lebao on 04/09/01 before arriving in Dazhou. *XFFL*, 121/16b–18a.
179 *XFFL*, 116/7b–8a. On Kuilun's painting skill, see Yu, *Luanyang lu*, 2/13a–b.
180 Jiaqing had previously told Kuilun to fight a band led by Wang Dengting, a Dazhou rebel. *XFFL*, 118/33a–34a, 122/23b–28b, 123/14b–16b.
181 *XFFL*, 124/1a–7a, 130/21a–22b.
182 Kuilun retained Liu Qing and Yan Shihong. *XFFL*, 126/18a–b; *QSG*, 11300.
183 In a more sympathetic tone, Kuilun reported that Lebao had conducted occasional battles to repel rebels from Dazhou (so he was not totally idle) and that Lebao was not wrong to assert that the total number of rebels had declined. Kuilun also thought that Lebao and Funing were not likely to have collaborated in misappropriating the funds, although there was no conflict between the two. *XFFL*, 124/1a–6a.
184 *XFFL*, 130/22a–23b.
185 *XFFL*, 124/7b–12a, 126/12b.
186 *XFFL*, 127/18a–25a.
187 *JQSYD*, 5:74.
188 *XFFL*, 130/21a–27a.
189 He wanted Wu Xiongguang to take care of the investigation in Henan and Songyun in Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 129/28b–29a.
190 *XFFL*, 130/26b–27a.
191 Per the order of the emperor, Funing was arrested at the beginning of 1800. *QSLJQ*, 56/15b–18b.
192 Cao took out 3.7 taels from every 100 taels he issued. Kuilun and Guwanghing, 05/01/08, GZDJQ, 4712; *XFFL*, 131/30a–34a.
193 *XFFL*, 126/12b.
194 *XFFL*, 22/36b, 22/42a, 79/31b.
195 The recipient of the gifts told this to Zhaolian, the author of *Xiaoting zalu*; see pp. 258–59.
196 *XFFL*, 131/35b–37b.
197 *XFFL*, 131/28a–30b.
198 On Kuilun's arrival, Eldemboo tried to divide the Sichuan theater between him and Kuilun, staying in northern Sichuan himself and having Kuilun take on the rebels in eastern Sichuan. At the end of the ninth month, Eldemboo proposed to equip Kuilun with two-thousand-plus troops and to send Chunning and Besiyang to report to Kuilun. Early in the tenth month, Eldemboo again expected Kuilun to join the fight after the investigation ended. *XFFL*, 123/3b–7b, 126/2b–3a, 126/6a–b, 128/17a.
199 *XFFL*, 122/23b–27a.
200 Eldemboo ordered Chunning to lead 450 native soldiers from Jinchuan. *XFFL*,

130/30b–33a.

201 *XFFL*, 130/11a–16b. See chapter 7 for further discussion of the "long-term mules."

202 *XFFL*, 130/16b–19b, 133/32a–42b.

203 *XFFL*, 130/16b–19b.

204 *XFFL*, 133/20b–42b.

205 *XFFL*, 133/42b–44a.

206 *XFFL*, 112/12a–15a, 112/27b–30a.

207 *XFFL*, 112/12a–15a.

208 Nayancheng requested to take in advance five-years' stipend as minister of works (360 taels per year) and one of his many "silver to nourish virtue" allowances (600 taels per year), totaling 4,800 taels. Given his numerous positions, 4,800 taels would not have greatly affected his family, whereas two years' allowance would be a considerable amount for Taibu. *XFFL*, 131/10a–12a, 133/14b–20a.

209 *XFFL*, 133/45b–46a.

210 *XFFL*, 135/16a–17b.

211 *XFFL*, 114/6a–11b, 128/19b–21a, 129/33b–34b.

212 One thousand from each of the two provinces. *XFFL*, 111/32b–42a, 114/18a–20b. But Wesibu said that it was not necessary for Mingliang and Eldemboo to come to Hubei. *XFFL*, 114/6a–b, 115/16a–21a.

213 On 04/08/09, the Xu-Li force took the wall-less city of Guizhou but did not hold it. *XFFL*, 121/23b–24a, 122/23b–25a.

214 Delengtai was granted a hereditary title, "commandant of cavalry" (*qiduwei*). Bo Sanpin, another chief of the band, was captured later. *XFFL*, 115/1a–5b, 117/1a–3a; *Daning xianzhi*, 5/10b–11a.

215 *XFFL*, 117/1a–4a, 118/1a–6b, 119/1a–5a, 121/19a–23a.

216 The only city that suffered some damage was Guizhou, which had been partially burned down by the Xu-Li force. Wesibu did not report it, but Jiaqing was informed by "another source." *XFFL*, 122/21b–22a, 129/33a, 129/34b.

217 Wesibu was granted the title of "commandant of fleet-as-clouds cavalry" (*yunqiwei*), and Sun Qingyuan was promoted to regional commander. *XFFL*, 115/23a–b, 121/24b–30a, 124/9a–b.

218 *XFFL*, 128/20a.

219 *XFFL*, 112/25a–26b, 113/5a–6a, 113/16a–19a, 117/6a–7b, 125/16a–17a.

220 *XFFL*, 116/29b–32b, 117/7b–9b.

221 Gao Junde's and Gao Chengjie's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:82–88.

222 Cui Zonghe and Hu Mingyuan, both being Zhang Hancao's followers, formed another band, but then merged with the Dai Family Regiment. *XFFL*, 342/25a–b, 346/2b–4b.

223 *XFFL*, 122/23b–25a.

224 *XFFL*, 117/10b–12b.

225 Eldemboo was rewarded with another title, commander-in-chief of the Chinese White Banner. *XFFL*, 120/29a–35a, 123/1a–3b, 123/6a–b.

226 *XFFL*, 126/1a–5a, 126/21b–22a, 128/11a. Qishiwu had participated in several frontier wars in the late Qianlong period and joined the White Lotus War in 1796. He was promoted to Sichuan's provincial military commander in 1798. *QSG*, 11187–89.

227 Songyun said this to imply that he was not impressed with Delengtai's other qualities. *XFFL*, 120/16a.

228 Curiously, Delengtai reported that only a few Qing soldiers were injured in this battle. *BLJZL*, 1:436–40. *XFFL*, 122/28b–33b, 124/14a–19b, 129/1a–11b.

229 Delengtai claimed that his men killed Zhang Shihu in Xixiang and captured a

sectarian teacher from Xiangyang. *XFFL*, 131/22a–27a. Then Delengtai repulsed a rebel group from the south bank of the Han River to Sichuan and pursued it westward to Guangyuan. In a series of battles en route, Delengtai killed many and captured hundreds, including Fu Yueming, a rebel chief of Dongxiang. *XFFL*, 134/19a–25b. However, Zhang Shihu was not killed; he was later caught in 1802. Delengtai apologized later for falsely claiming Zhang's death. *XFFLXB*, 11/30b–32a.

230 *XFFL*, 129/8a–b, 134/23b–24a.

231 Writing this memorial before knowing of their dismissals, Eldemboo planned to have Mingliang and Yongbao stay in Shaanxi for border defense. *XFFL*, 128/12b–19b.

232 Jiaqing had ordered that Mingliang, Nayancheng, Kuilun, Delengtai, and Wesibu report on their respective operations but not necessarily through Eldemboo. *XFFL*, 120/35a–36b.

233 *XFFL*, 128/25a, 129/11b–12b.

234 *XFFL*, 130/8b–9a, 132/27b–28a, 133/45b–48b.

235 *XFFL*, 132/13a–18a, 136/15b.

236 Anlu joined the campaign earlier in 1799 after he escorted war funds to Sichuan. Anlu was ambushed and killed when he led a few cavalrymen to pursue the insurgents in retreat. *XFFL*, 132/18a–19a, 132/27b, 133/5b–7b; *QSG*, 11247–48.

237 *XFFL*, 134/7a–13a.

238 *XFFL*, 136/12a–15a.

239 Before seizing the height, Ran sent a dispatch to attack the Qing logistical corps to upset his enemy. But another high point held by Yang Yuchun was not taken by the rebels. *XFFL*, 137/16b–20a.

240 *XFFL*, 131/1a–3a.

241 *XFFL*, 119/7a–8b, 120/24b–27a, 122/22a–23b. Because of logistical strains, Jiaqing halted the thousand bannermen from Heilongjiang who had not set out. *XFFL*, 118/34a–b.

242 *XFFL*, 131/3a–5a.

243 *XFFL*, 131/6a–10a, 133/12b–14b. Shortly after, Nayancheng sent another memorial detailing more difficulties on his way to finish off the rebels. Nayancheng, 05/01/27, GZDJQ, 4858; *XFFL*, 147/40a–44b.

244 *XFFL*, 131/17b–20b, 132/30b–32a.

245 *XFFL*, 133/9b–12b, 135/18a–20b, 136/19b–23a.

246 *XFFL*, 133/16b–19a, 135/20b–22b.

247 Nayancheng also ruled out Jiaqing's idea of setting the forest ablaze to force the rebels out because the forests in wintertime were too wet to burn. Nor was it possible to force the insurgents to an open and flat area for a pincer attack together with Eldemboo, given the enormousness of the Qinling Mountains. *XFFL*, 138/20a–24a; 138/25a–b.

248 Jiaqing had thought of sending some of Nayancheng's bannermen to Sichuan on more than one previous occasion. *XFFL*, 137/20b–25b, 138/7b–12a, 138/27a–31b, 142/12a–14b.

249 *XFFL*, 111/1a–6b.

250 *XFFL*, *j*. 111–12, 116, 125, 129, 134, 136 passim.

251 *XFFL*, 133/1a–4a, 136/6b–10a, 136/34a–36b, 138/1a–5b.

252 Days after he cashiered Lebao, Jiaqing issued two edicts to reiterate his policy aimed at luring rebel rank and filers from the rebellion. He also called on provincial officials to identify and punish a few "wicked" local officials so that people's grievances could be addressed. *XFFL*, 111/19a–22a, 112/2b–6b. On 04/10/10, Jiaqing exhorted Eldemboo not to punish the civilians who had

been coerced into the rebel ranks, even though some of them had the "white lotus" characters tattooed on their faces. *XFFL*, 127/1b–2b.

4. REVERSAL, 1800

Epigraph: *JQSYD*, 4:501.

1 It has been held in the existing scholarship that the Jiaqing emperor had turned the tide, and his new policies proved to be effective. See, for example, Suzuki, *Shinchō chūkishi*, 180–211.

2 When Chesenbao escorted captured Gao Junde to Beijing at the beginning of the year, he told Jiaqing that the insurgents were extremely exhausted, lacking necessities and fighting capacity, and that they struggled to stay alive by using the topography to their advantage. *XFFL*, 136/38b–40a. Tojin reported a similar situation to Jiaqing when he returned from Sichuan later in the year. *XFFL*, 139/35a–b.

3 *XFFL*, 136/31b–33a, 136/38b–40a, 137/1a–3a, 137/20b–25b, 139/32a–35a, 140/9a–10a, 140/23b–24b.

4 Wang Dengting was captured in Nanjiang by militiamen while he was alone. Wang might have been sent out by the rebels to link up with other insurgent groups. *XFFL*, 137/25b–30b.

5 *JQSYD*, 4:501–3. The official who made the proposal was Fashishan, a Mongol bannerman and chancellor of the national university.

6 *XFFL*, 140/23b–26b.

7 Interrogated in Beijing in late 1799, Gao Junde and Gao Chengjie said that the rebels were skeptical of the Qing conciliatory policy and hesitant to surrender in fear of being killed. *BLJZL*, 5:87–88.

8 Kuilun charged Funing with slaughtering surrendered insurgents when he apprehended Funing for suspected embezzlement of war funds late in 1799. *XFFL*, 137/8b–11b, 137/32a–35b.

9 *XFFL*, 141/32b–33b, 143/29b–30b.

10 *XFFL*, 142/32b–34a, 144/22a–24b, 146/17b–20a.

11 *XFFL*, 120/16a–17a.

12 *XFFL*, 138/16b–18a.

13 *QSLJQ*, 56/21b–22b.

14 In another memorial, Eldemboo gave an optimistic view of the campaign, however. *XFFL*, 140/4a–7a.

15 Several Qing officers were killed in the encounters. *XFFL*, 139/6a–11a, 140/27a–29b, 141/17b–24a.

16 Before their crossing at Yuguan, the rebels attempted to cross the Jialing River near the seat of Lüeyang, but that attempt was foiled by the militias. Yuguan was guarded by Changheng, a circuit intendant, and 1,200 troops. Jilantai and his 1,000 troops, who were nearby, did not come to aid them. GZDJQ, 4710; *XFFL*, 142/26a–27b, 143/5a–9a, 143/26b–28b, 155/7b–8b.

17 Songyun asked Nayancheng to send to him half of his troops. Wang Wenxiong hurried to Mianxian from Xixiang. With Wang away from the Han River, the rebels in southern Shaanxi made many attempts to cross the river, but all failed. GZDJQ, 4710; *XFFL*, 139/6a–11a, 140/27a–29b, 141/17b–24a.

18 *QSLJQ*, 57/4a–b; *XFFL*, 141/26a–28a.

19 *XFFL*, 139/13b–14a, 141/28b–29b.

20 *XFFL*, 140/32b–35b.

21 *XFFL*, 139/15a–18b, 141/3a–6b, 141/9b–12b, 141/17a–b; *QSLJQ*, 57/3a–4a.

22 Neither Kuilun nor Eldemboo ever mentioned their clash, but Guwanghing reported on it. *XFFL*, 153/31a–33b.

23 GZDJQ, 4714, 4715; *XFFL*, 144/3a–12b.
24 *XFFL*, 139/18b–19b.
25 *XFFL*, 143/1a–4a.
26 *XFFL*, 142/26a–27b, 143/4a–9a, 144/14a–b.
27 *XFFL*, 148/2a–3b, 148/15a–20b.
28 *XFFL*, 140/12b–16a, 143/12b–19b, 145/4a–10a.
29 Mingliang was granted the minor title *jinding lingsui* but did not have a stipend. *XFFL*, 143/31a–32b.
30 *XFFL*, 144/1a–3a, 146/1a–3b.
31 *XFFL*, 146/3b–7a, 146/9a–13b.
32 Eldemboo defended Qishiwu, saying that Qishiwu had fought with Xin Cong and his small band shuttling between Shaanxi and Sichuan. *XFFL*, 138/18a–19a, 140/2b–3a.
33 *XFFL*, 145/15a–b.
34 *XFFL*, 156/41b–44a.
35 *XFFL*, 140/1a–2b, 140/4a–5a.
36 Ran Tianyuan's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:90; Wang Ying's confession, p. 91; Zhang Zicong's confession, pp. 109–10. *XFFL*, 140/1b–2a, 160/29a–b.
37 *XFFL*, 144/15b–16b, 146/36a–37a, 147/16a–17a.
38 Kuilun thought that the insurgents had neared the end of their strength and that the war-front rectification had borne fruit, for the generals no longer falsified achievements, and many loopholes in the war finances had been closed. *XFFL*, 139/19a–23a, 143/19b–22b. He did not relate the difficulties he had encountered until he set out from Dazhou to engage the rebels. *XFFL*, 144/30b–32b.
39 On New Year's Eve, when Eldemboo requested a few additional clerks, Guwanghing rejected the request, but Kuilun donated his "silver to nourish virtue" allowance to pay 4 taels per month to each of the additional clerks. Jiaqing praised Guwanghing for his strictness but directed the use of war funds to pay for Eldemboo's extra clerks, given that Kuilun was not well off. *XFFL*, 138/14a–18a.
40 *XFFL*, 143/22b–26b.
41 *XFFL*, 139/19a–22b, 143/19b–22b, 144/24b–26a.
42 *XFFL*, 139/35a–37b, 143/19b–22b, 143/24a–25b. In the summer of 1799, Jiaqing had warned of the possibility that the rebels might cross the river to target affluent western Sichuan. He had instructed Lebao to send regulars to secure all ferries along the Jialing River. *XFFL*, 102/21b–22b. Lebao ignored his instruction.
43 *XFFL*, 138/17a, 141/31b–34a.
44 *XFFL*, 142/20b, 143/11a–12b; *QSLJQ*, 60/12a–13b. Somebody had accused Guwanghing's servants of extorting money from local officials during his first trip to Sichuan. Although the Ministry of Personnel had proposed to dismiss Guwanghing, Jiaqing retained him in his position because it was not done by Guwanghing himself. *JQSYD*, 4:289–90. But Jiaqing cited this incident when he dismissed Guwanghing.
45 GZDJQ, 19739; *XFFL*, 142/1a–4b, 146/34b–35a, 152/16a–17a.
46 *XFFL*, 144/15b–16b, 146/25a–b, 146/36a–37a, 147/16a–17a.
47 The Qing records do not indicate where the coalition crossed the Qu River. Ran Tianyuan only mentioned that they crossed the river in "Xinning and Dazhu." Ran's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:90.
48 Shi Yunyu, the Chongqing prefect, mobilized all his forces, 2,000 troops and 1,500 militiamen, and had all the boats moored on the south bank. North of the river, 300 troops were dug in inside the walled town of Jiangbei; the

insurgents did not try to take the town. Shi, *Duxuelu wugao*, 1/23a–24b.

49 Ran Tianyuan's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:90; Wang Ying's confession, p. 91; Zhang Zicong's confession, p. 110. *XFFL*, 152/16a–17a; 177/12a–14a. Sun Xiyuan and Mi Guang, a lower officer in Dingyuan, were dismissed and punished. *XFFL*, 152/16a–19b, 160/7b–9a, 160/11b–12b; *KJJFSB*, 5/1a–b.

50 Kuilun instructed the local officials in Longan prefecture to step up defenses and ordered Mukedeng'a, who had been stationed in Kuizhou, to head to Longan and lead the defense of the Jialing River. *XFFL*, 142/7b–8b, 145/17b, 146/20b–27a, 146/38a–39a.

51 *XFFL*, 147/1a–5a.

52 Jiaqing did not deprive Kuilun of his hat trappings because he wanted Kuilun to be able to maintain his authority in this critical time. *XFFL*, 147/5b–10b.

53 *XFFL*, 147/13a–b, 147/22a–24a.

54 Lebao was ordered to go to Gansu and to meet with Eldemboo before going to Sichuan. *JQQJZ*, 5:45–46; *QSLJQ*, 59/1b–3a.

55 But Jiaqing wanted Guwanghing to report truthfully on his cuts of the militias. *XFFL*, 145/10b–17a, 145/17a–18a.

56 *XFFL*, 146/35b–37a, 147/29b–34b, 148/21b–25a, 149/25a–34b.

57 *KJJFSB*, 5/1a–2a.

58 *XFFL*, 149/18b–21b.

59 *XFFL*, 150/11a–15b.

60 Wang Ying's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:92; *XFFL*, 153/31a–33b, 159/12a.

61 *XFFL*, 152/10b–15b, 153/1a–3b.

62 Qishiwu arrived in Shunqing one month after the rebels' Jialing River crossing. But he stopped there, only sending Li Shaozu and 4,300 troops and militiamen to report to Kuilun. *XFFL*, 153/4a–5a, 155/24a–32a, 156/28b–33b.

63 *Da Qing lichao shilu,* Yongzheng period, 108/28b–31b. Also see Perdue, *China Marches West*, 253–54.

64 *XFFL*, 150/15b–22a.

65 Having been alerted by a Sichuanese scholar in Beijing that, after they crossed the Jialing River, the rebels were barricaded by the two rivers, which was dangerous to them, Jiaqing blamed Kuilun for not reporting it and not acting upon it, and ordered Lebao to go directly to Sichuan to wipe out the rebels between the two rivers but not to go to Gansu to meet with Eldemboo. *QSLJQ*, 60/9b–11a; *XFFL*, 151/18a–b, 152/26a–27a, 153/19b–22b, 153/35a–36b, 154/11a–12a.

66 *JQQJZ*, 5:92–95; *QSLJQ*, 60/15b–19b.

67 *XFFL*, 104/21b, 109/3b–7a.

68 Jiaqing thought that it might have been because Songyun had been bookish and dogmatic that Qianlong had left him in Tibet for years. *XFFL*, 132/28a–29a, *JQQJZ*, 5:275. The original of Songyun's memorial does not seem to be extant.

69 When Nayancheng arrived, he reported another example of Songyun's "mismanagement" to the emperor: Songyun had ordered Hengšui to stay in Shaanxi to help fight Zhang Hanchao so that the rebels in Gansu were not finished off. *XFFL*, 129/19a–20a, 129/25a–27a, 131/13a–b, 131/21a–23a, 132/11a–12b.

70 Those titles were junior guardian of the heir apparent and palace guardsman. *XFFL*, 132/28a–30b.

71 *XFFL*, 136/5b–6a. Jiaqing once said: "It seems that both Nayancheng and Songyun have no talent and luck to enjoy my favor." *XFFL*, 138/7b–12a.

72 Songyun, 05/01/08, GZDJQ, 4708.

73 But Songyun had been ordered to stay in Shaanxi for the time being because of

the crisis in Gansu and southern Shaanxi. GZDJQ, 5077; *QSLJQ*, 57/4b–5a; *XFFL*, 144/ 20b–21a, 148/2a–3b, 148/5a–6b, 149/5a–9a, 153/26a–b. On 05/01/18, Jiaqing dismissed Wesibu as governor-general of Huguang and appointed Jiang Sheng, the governor of Hunan since 1791, to succeed him, but Jiang would stay in Wuchang to deal with local affairs. Therefore, Songyun was left in Hubei's battleground areas to lead the campaign along with Mingliang. *JQQJZ*, 5:22–23.

74 Being nearly sixty years old, Hongfeng was soon sent back to Jingzhou. GZDJQ, 5164; *XFFL*, 150/4b–10a, 151/19b–23a, 153/11a–b, 155/40b–42b, 156/21b–22b.

75 *XFFL*, 162/3b–4b, 162/5b–8b; *QSLJQ*, 62/25a–b.

76 *QSLJQ*, 65/16b–20a; *JQQJZ*, 5:275–77.

77 Songyun was again appointed Ili general in 1802 and left Xinjiang in 1809.

78 *XFFL*, 147/34b–35a.

79 *XFFL*, 154/14b–16b.

80 Delengtai received letters from Eldemboo and Kuilun on the Jialing River crossing on 05/02/11, when he was in Huixian. He set out for Sichuan the following day. GZDJQ, 5094.

81 GZDJQ, 5185; *XFFL*, 157/8b–18a, 157/20b–22b. Taking this as a victory, Jiaqing rewarded all the grand councilors, the secretaries of the Grand Council and the Ministry of War, as well as the postal service personnel between Beijing and the frontline. *XFFL*, 157/21b–22b.

82 GZDJQ, 5301.

83 Jiaqing ordered that Ran be executed in front of Zhu Shedou's soul tablet. *XFFL*, 159/1a–11b, 159/6b–7b.

84 GZDJQ, 5351.

85 Delengtai had killed all the captives by slicing and slotting (*luange*) after the battle of Matigang. After the battle of Shimenzhai, he killed 18 rebel chiefs by "a thousand cuts," and executed 561 captives, which Jiaqing endorsed by writing "yes" on Delengtai's memorial. *XFFL*, 159/9a–11a, 161/1a–6a; GZDJQ, 5351.

86 *XFFL*, 156/45b–48b, 157/8b–18a, 157/20b–22b, 161/6a–11a; *JQQJZ*, 5:130, 155; *QSLJQ*, 61/19a.

87 *XFFL*, 161/1a–6a.

88 In his memorial on 05/03/13, Lebao mentioned that he would meet Delengtai. GZDJQ, 5348.

89 Lebao acquired Shi Jin and Zhang Lianghuai, the two Chinese officers who had served under him in Guizhou, and their four thousand Guizhou troops. Lebao also got hold of Ma Zhaorui, who had saved Yongbao's life the previous fall. GZDJQ, 5348; *XFFL*, 154/32b–37a, 156/8b–14b, 160/28b–31a.

90 *QSLJQ*, 62/4a–5b; *XFFL*, 160/31a–35b.

91 *XFFL*, 152/22a–25b, 153/19b–22b.

92 *XFFL*, 160/1a–7a, 160/23b–28b, 161/19b–22a. After the rebels' crossing of the Jialing River, one thousand bannermen and Green Standard troops had been deployed from Chengdu to Taihezhen, but they seem not to have arrived. *XFFL*, 148/22a–23b, 148/24b–27a, 148/32b–34b.

93 Wang Ying's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:92; Zhang Zicong's confession, p. 110.

94 *XFFL*, 161/19b–23b, 163/9b–17b, 165/7a–10b, 177/14a–17a.

95 GZDJQ, 5392; *XFFL*, 161/22a–23b.

96 In addition to six hundred native soldiers deployed from the Jinchuan area, Kuilun sent more reinforcements to Chengdu. To discourage the insurgents from going to Chengdu, Jiaqing ordered the quick execution of Ran Tianyuan. *XFFL*, 164/9a–15b, 166/39a–41b.

97 *XFFL*, 163/9b–17b.
98 The rebels killed the Jianzhou prefect when they approached Jianzhou. *XFFL*, 164/26a–30a, 166/39a–41b.
99 *XFFL*, 165/1a–7a.
100 *XFFL*, 165/14a–17b, 167/1a–7b; Zhang Zicong's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:110.
101 Jiaqing cleared Lebao of any responsibility in the debacles in Sichuan, including his reduction of militias along the Jialing River in the summer of 1799. *XFFL*, 161/24b–34b.
102 Before Lebao's request, Jiaqing had ordered Zhou to investigate Zhu Shedou's death. GZDJQ, 5035, 5397; *XFFL*, 167/7b–9b, 167/13a–b.
103 Admitting that he was "incompetent," Kuilun nevertheless defended his effort in the defense of the two rivers, stressing that he was not responsible for cutting the militias along the Jialing River. *XFFL*, 168/1a–6a, 170/4a–7a. Liu Yinquan, the Mianzhou prefect, later disputed some charges against Kuilun, saying that it was not true that he had requested troops from Kuilun. But Lebao added that, when tens of thousands of civilians on the east bank of the Fu River fled to Jinshanyi, Kuilun only let one boat ferry them after questioning each. *XFFL*, 177/12a–17a, 184/30b–33b, 184/35b–36b.
104 Jiaqing was concerned that executing Kuilun in Chengdu would make the rebels contemptuous of Qing officials, given that Ran Tianyuan and Chen Defeng had been executed there recently. *JQQJZ*, 5:238–40, 242–43; *QSLJQ*, 62/4a–5b, 62/22b–24b, 63/2b–5a, 64/22a–25b; *XFFL*, 170/8a–16a.
105 *JQQJZ*, 5:420–23; *QSLJQ*, 70/14b–19a. On Yang Yingju in the Myanmar campaign, see Dai, "Disguised Defeat," 157–58.
106 *JQSYD*, 5:337–38; *QSLJQ*, 71/4b–6b.
107 *QSLJQ*, 62/22b–24b, 70/19a–b; *XFFL*, 161/24b–33a; *XFFL*, 163/23a–26a, 164/35a–37b, 165/10b–12a, 187/24a–25a.
108 Jiaqing had not met Kuilun until the latter returned to Beijing from Fujian at the beginning of 1799. *QSLJQ*, 64/22a–b.
109 *XFFL*, 187/25a–27b. After all the rebels had left western Sichuan, Jiaqing had set a new deadline to complete the war within the intercalary month that followed the fourth month. *QSLJQ*, 64/11a–b; *XFFL*, 167/9b–11a.
110 Eldemboo argued that he had left Kuilun sufficient forces, implying that Kuilun's incompetence was responsible. *XFFL*, 147/10b–12b, 147/15b–22a, 150/17b–20b, 151/14b–16b, 152/2b–6a, 152/7a–9a, 153/31a–33b, 156/40a, 156/41b–45b, 170/4a–7a; *QSLJQ*, 61/18a–19a.
111 *QSLJQ*, 63/7b; *XFFL*, 163/19b–23a, 164/34a–35a, 165/20b–23b. For the pacification of western Sichuan, Jiaqing granted only a promotion to Delengtai's son, a one-month stipend to the newly arrived six thousand Guizhou troops, and an award to their commander, Shi Jin. *QSLJQ*, 64/11a–b; *XFFL*, 167/9b–11a.
112 Yu Tŭk-kong, a Korean visitor to China, mentioned that many people whom he had met were resentful toward Kuilun. Yu, *Yantai zaiyoulu*, 19b.
113 Xu Jing, *Yagetang wenji*, 22/2–3.
114 Parts of this section are drawn from Dai, "Broken Passage."
115 *XFFL*, *j*. 138–40 passim, 142/18a–26a, 144/12b–13b, 146/29a–31b; GZDJQ, 4736.
116 *XFFL*, 144/18a–20a, 145/18a–20b.
117 Before the battle of Longshanzhen, the rebels had been busy looting and kidnaping the local residents, which made this an easy victory for Nayancheng, who claimed that his men had killed and captured thousands of people and taken more than three thousand mules, horses, oxen, and sheep, with only a couple of his troops slightly injured. Following the battle, Nayancheng

requested, for the first time, to promote and award thirty-five officers. GZDJQ, 4859, 4972; *XFFL*, 147/35a–40a, 151/1a–7b, 152/6b–7a.

118 It took him two weeks to reach Baocheng from Dazhou. Then he stayed in Longzhou, Gansu, for days. Jiaqing sent Eldemboo's nephew and a court doctor to Gansu to care for Eldemboo and granted him some ginseng. *XFFL*, 148/1a–b, 148/9b–15a, 152/2b–6a, 152/7a–9a.

119 Quotation from GZDJQ, 19773. *XFFL*, 138/7b–12a, 139/13b–14a, 140/8b, 142/28b.

120 Jiaqing did not give Nayancheng a new seal of grand minister consultant but told him to continue using his seal of imperial commissioner. GZDJQ, 5023; *XFFL*, 147/38b–39a, 147/48b–49b, 152/1a–2b, 152/7a–9a.

121 *XFFL*, 149/9b–13a, 152/1a–2b, 154/1a–3b, 155/1a–7b, 157/1a–6a, 159/13a–14b.

122 *XFFL*, 160/12b–15b.

123 *XFFL*, 144/18a–20a.

124 *XFFL*, 142/18a–20a, 157/6a–8b, 157/18a–20b.

125 *XFFL*, *j*. 152–54 passim, 158/1a–2b, 164/1a–4a.

126 *XFFL*, 154/46a–48a, *j*. 155–56 and 158 passim, 160/20a–23b, 162/8b–11b, 166/1a–5b.

127 *XFFL*, 156/40a–41b, 158/17a–20b, 160/12b–17a, 161/11a–14b.

128 *XFFL*, 163/1a–9b, 163/28a–30a.

129 *XFFL*, 164/15b–19b.

130 *XFFL*, 161/14b–19a, 161/31a–34b, 162/16b–22a, 163/30b–32b, 164/4b–6a, 164/21b–24a, 165/30a–33b, 165/13b–16b, 165/28b–29a, 166/5b–12b.

131 GZDJQ, 5376, 5454; *XFFL*, 164/15b–19b, 167/24a–29b.

132 Of the 6,000 troops sent to Shaanxi, 2,000 were from Gansu, 2,000 from Shanxi, and 2,000 were Guizhou troops from Sichuan. Of the 2,000 troops sent to Henan, 1,000 were from Zhili and 1,000 from Shandong. Jiaqing sent Dingzhu, the provincial military commander of Jiangnan who had served in Henan previously, to lead the 2,000 troops. *XFFL*, 167/29b–34b, 168/6a–10b.

133 GZDJQ, 5261, 5345, 5415; *XFFL*, 150/25b–27b, 150/30a–31b.

134 *XFFL*, 165/20b–23b, 168/16b–18b.

135 Another thousand soldiers were sent from Shanxi to Henan, while both Zhili and Shanxi were ordered to keep thousands of troops mobilized. *XFFL*, 168/18b–27b, 168/30b–32b, 171/15b–26b.

136 *XFFL*, 169/1a–9a, 169/18b–23a, 170/22b–27b. Relieved, Jiaqing returned the feather trappings to the Shaanxi leaders and generously rewarded Eldemboo and his subordinates. Yang Yuchun was given the hereditary title of "commandant of fleet-as-clouds cavalry" (*yunqiwei*), and Yang Fang was given a *baturu* title. *XFFL*, 171/1a–9a, 171/13b–15b, 172/1a–9b, 173/18a–20b.

137 *XFFL*, 176/10b–15b.

138 *XFFL*, 173/22b–29b.

139 *XFFL*, 173/30b–31a.

140 *XFFL*, 165/1a–7a, 165/13b–16b, 165/30a–33b, 166/5b–12b, 166/40a–41a, 167/11a–b, 167/13b–15a, 170/25a–26b; *JQQJZ*, 5:222.

141 The deprived positions included those on the Grand Council, at the South Study, and in the Imperial Household Department. The three positions left to him were as minister of war, as vice commander-in-chief of the Chinese Bordered White Banner, and the lectureship at the Classics Colloquium. *XFFL*, 174/6a–13a, 174/19b–23b, 174/32a–34b.

142 *JQQJZ*, 5:368–73; *QSLJQ*, 68/11b–24b; *XFFL*, 182/16a–24b.

143 *JQQJZ*, 5:374–75; *QSLJQ*, 68/24a–25a; *XFFL*, 182/29a–b. But Jiaqing promoted Nayancheng's cousin, Nayanbao, to vice commander-in-chief on the

same day. *QSLJQ*, 68/25a–b.

144 Jiaqing criticized Guwanghing for his attempt to place Kuilun in a deadly situation. GZDJQ, 4974, 5122, 5360; *XFFL*, 148/23b–24b, 148/26b–27a, 151/12b–14a, 152/22a–25b, 153/31a–35a.

145 *XFFL*, 164/32a–33a.

146 Jiaqing warned that Tojin and Guwanghing should not plead to stay at the front and join the war, since both were "mediocre." *QSLJQ*, 66/19a–20a; *XFFL*, 177/1a–3b.

147 *XFFL*, 177/3b–7b.

148 *XFFL*, 171/12a–13b.

149 But Jiaqing ruled that his former title of provincial judicial commissioner and his feather trappings be returned later or when the campaign ended, if he kept doing good job. *JQQJZ*, 5:283; *XFFL*, 173/13b–15a, 173/17b–18a.

150 At first Jilantai was demoted to brigade commander. But he then failed to stop Yang Kaijia from retuning to Shaanxi from Gansu, so Jiaqing ordered him exiled to Xinjiang. Changheng was to be exiled to Xinjiang when the war ended. *JQQJZ*, 5:108, 190–91; *QSLJQ*, 61/2b, 63/8b; *XFFL*, 155/7b–8b, 155/22a–b, 156/40a–41b, 164/19b–21a, 164/24a–26a.

151 *XFFL*, 156/45b–48b, 158/20b–26b, 161/23b–24a, 161/31a–34b, 163/17b–19b, 163/26a–28a, 174/17b–19a, 174/24a–25b; *QSLJQ*, 61/27a–28a, 66/1b–2b; *JQQJZ*, 5:183–84, 289–90.

152 Jiaqing dismissed Qige, a regional vice commander, and exiled him to Ili, for not returning to duty for one month after being slightly injured and for bringing back only 267 of his 950 troops (some had died, but many were left in various places to treat wounds or illness, or to serve as guards, and some might have deserted). *XFFL*, 175/1a–4a; *JQQJZ*, 5:294–95. In the early summer, Jiaqing dismissed Ke Fan, the regional commander of Shan'an command, for having allowed the rebels to pass his way, and ordered him displayed in a cangue and exiled to Ili after the war if he failed to redeem himself. Meanwhile, Jiaqing recalled two Manchu officers in Shaanxi, Dechun and Guolin, to their banners in Beijing, for the former had been constantly ill and the latter had failed to intercept Yang Kaijia's band when it approached Shangzhou. Jiaqing also inquired about Liu Zhiren, who had not fought after being crushed by the rebels, but Jiaqing allowed him to stay in his position to train new soldiers after both Eldemboo and Nayancheng spoke in his defense. *XFFL*, 164/38b–39b, 176/15b–18b, 176/29a–31a. Jiaqing also censured Wang Wenxiong for not having fought for a long time and checked on four officers who had been released from the jail and sent to Sichuan without pay in 1799. The four had been punished for their failure to stop the rebels from escaping the siege at Ziqiu in southwestern Hubei in the autumn of 1796. *XFFL*, 166/29a–30a, 166/31b–32a, 166/43b–44a.

153 *XFFL*, 164/41b–42b.

154 *XFFL*, 182/27b–29a.

155 When Gao Junde mentioned Liu Leng during his interrogations, Jiaqing suspected that Liu Leng was Liu Zhixie. *XFFL*, 137/3a–4a. In the late spring, 1800, a captured rebel spy stated that Liu Zhixie had first sent his son to the Dai Family Regiment to tell the rebels to go to Henan and disband, and then had gone himself, repeating the same appeal. But Jiaqing did not believe it. *XFFL*, 175/23b–26b.

156 Liu Zhixie's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:93–106; *XFFL*, 197/29a–b.

157 Jiaqing once said that Ruzhou had been a "quiet" area. *XFFL*, 197/29b–30a.

158 Ji Darong, Liao Yin (Yexian's magistrate), and Zhou Ji (Nanyang prefect) were all rewarded with officer positions or promotions. Liu's confessions, Ji Darong's

confessions, Li Jie's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:93–108; *XFFL*, 190/1a–3b, 191/10a–15b; *JQSYD*, 5:355–56, 378.

159 *JQSYD*, 5:329–67, 379, 392–93 passim; *XFFL*, 190/1a–3b and *j*. 191 passim; Wu, *Yijiang bilu*, 1/14b–15b.

160 Jiaqing had ordered the 1,500 bannermen recently deployed from Jilin and Heilongjiang to go to Henan, but the uprising had been put down before they arrived. *XFFL*, 190/3b–6b, 191/13b–15b, 190/16b; *JQSYD*, 5:363–64.

161 *BLJZL*, 5:93–106; *QSLJQ*, 72/21b–24b.

162 Jiaqing also pardoned the Henan officials for their failure to detecting Liu's hiding place in their province. *JQSYD*, 5:343–44; *XFFL*, 191/4b–8b, 197/29a–30b, 198/7a–8b.

163 *XFFL*, 198/9a–11b, 199/5a–8a.

164 Xu Zengzhong and Lin Yi, "Liu Zhixie." The authors also dispute Liu's role as the chief leader of the Hunyuan sect, but they do not make this argument convincing.

165 Eldemboo mentioned early in 1800 that many true sectarian rebels did not fear death, regarding death as a necessary passage to a better lot after reincarnation. They would join whichever band was avaliable to them after their own was crushed. *XFFL*, 144/5a–b. When Zhou Tianxu, a Zhang Hanchao disciple, was captured in mid-1800, Zhou continued his defiance until he was executed by "a thousand cuts" in front of thousands of spectators. *XFFL*, 199/21a–22b.

166 Zhang Shihu's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:154–55.

167 *XFFL*, 121/1a–5a, 138/25a–b, 142/9b–12a, 170/18a–22b, 174/1a–2b.

168 Pang was soon killed in battle. *XFFL*, 173/28b–29a, 181/1a–7a. Mingliang and Yongbao reported in 1799 that a bandit group, "Hongqian," in the Qinling Mountains was mostly absorbed into the rebel ranks. *XFFL*, 100/8a–b.

169 In the spring of 1800, such a rebel agent was arrested in Shaanxi's Lantian. *XFFL*, 162/22a–23a.

170 *XFFL*, 100/1a–b, 129/16b–17b, 129/30a, 134/23b–24a, 192/28a.

171 *XFFL*, 140/1b.

172 *XFFL*, 182/35a–38b.

173 *XFFL*, *j*. 147, 150–53, 156 passim and 168/1a–3a; *QSLJQ*, 61/18a–19a.

174 Liu Qing was soon reinstated, but two officials in Taihezhen were executed and several others dismissed. *XFFL*, 165/12b–13b, 170/4a–7a, 177/20a–22b, 186/17a–22a.

175 Lebao interrogated Qishiwu and examined his wounds. He claimed that his wounds were genuine. *XFFL*, 156/45b–48b, 164/8a–9a, 177/17a–19a, 177/21b–22a, 189/11b–14b, 189/19a–b.

176 *XFFL*, 165/1a–7a, 166/40a–41a, 170/1a–4a, 170/7a–8a, 172/25b–30a, 172/30a–31b.

177 A Dazhou native and veteran rebel since 1796, Wang Ying deserted his band and went to work as a porter at a Qing logistical station in Longan but was recognized by an officer from Dazhou. He was executed in Chengdu. *XFFL*, 174/13a–16a, 174/21b–23a; Wang Ying's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:91–92.

178 *XFFL*, 174/16a–17b, 174/19b–24a; *JQQJZ*, 5:289.

179 *XFFL*, 174/3b–5a and *j*. 177–80, 182, 184 passim.

180 Lebao defended Besiyang but was harsher toward Zengshun. *XFFL*, 182, 5a–10b, 189/11b–14b.

181 *XFFL*, 160/23b–28b, 171/9a–13a, 183/5a–8b, 191/29b, 197/10a–11a, and *j*. 173–74, 178–79, 185, 187–89 passim.

182 *XFFL*, 186/17a–20a, 189/1a–6a, 193/1a–7b, 193/11b–13b.

183 *XFFL*, 193/7b–9a, 195/21b–24b, 197/14b–22a, 199/13a–15a.

184 When Xian Dachuan sent two messengers to talk to his uncle, the latter convinced the two to kill Xian. Xian's uncle instructed his militiamen to attack Xian, and then the two killed Xian and the last dozen rebels. *XFFL*, 195/17b–21b, 195/24b–29a.

185 *XFFL*, 195/21b–24b, 199/9a–13a, 201/5b–10b.

186 After all his last men deserted him, Zhang Zicong disguised himself as a refugee and begged for a living. *XFFL*, 201/5b–10b, 202/1a–6b, 203/17b–22b, 207/9a–18a, 208/1a–7a, 208/16b–22a, 210/11a–14a; Zhang Zicong's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:109–11.

187 *XFFL*, 183/13a–15b, 184/2a, 184/6b, 184/7a–10a, 187/34a–35b, 187/38b–40b, 197/22a–25b, 201/10b–14b.

188 *XFFL*, 189/16a–17b, 195/24b–29a, 199/15a–18a, 202/6b–9a, 203/31b–35b, 207/18a–20b.

189 Jiaqing agreed to let Saicungga stay but turned down their request for reinforcements. *XFFL*, 189/6a–11b, 197/20b–25b, 203/27a–28b, 203/35a–b.

190 *XFFL*, 207/18a–20b, 208/16b–22a, 210/14a–15a, 214/1a–14a.

191 *XFFL*, 216/24b–31a.

192 Jiaqing granted promotions and awards to more than sixty officers, local officials, and militiamen in Sichuan. *XFFL*, 208/22a–26b, 210/19b–21b, 210/27b–28a, 214/14a–18a, 216/31a–34b, 216/34b–36b.

193 *XFFL*, 176/10b–15b.

194 *XFFL*, *j*. 176 passim and 178/9a–11a, 179/1a–10a.

195 *XFFL*, *j*. 180–81, 183–84 passim.

196 But Eldemboo told Jiaqing that no reinforcement was necessary since the war had neared its end. *XFFL*, 184/37b–39a, 186/1a–5b, 188/12a–16a, 188/17b–19a.

197 For their failure to blockade the rebels from going to Gansu, Jiaqing gave Changlin and Taibu symbolic punishments and demoted and penalized several generals and officials. *XFFL*, 172/35b–38a, 179/15a–21a, 180/1a–8b, and *j*. 183, 185, 187 passim.

198 Dingzhu and one thousand Zhili soldiers arrived at Lushi, Henan, on 05/inter04/15. *XFFL*, 179/31a–33a, 182/13b–14b, 183/14b–16a, 185/21a–22b.

199 *XFFL*, 185/16a–17b, 186/27a–b, 231/25b–26a, 191/29b–31b. Within the band, the Gao people used a yellow banner with "Gaojiaying" (Gao family regiment) on it; the Ma group used a blue banner with "Ma Yuanshuai" (Marshal Ma) on it. *XFFL*, 212/1a–5a.

200 *XFFL*, 204/10b. Jiaqing ennobled Wang Wenxiong posthumously as a viscount of the third grade and granted his mother 1,000 taels. He filled Wang's position with Saicungga. *XFFL*, 192/17b–20b, 192/20b–22a, 194/11a–13b, 196/1a–4b, 196/6a–7b, 196/8a–b, 198/20a–22a.

201 *XFFL*, *j*. 186, 188, 190, 192–93, 195–96, 198, 201, 203, 205, 207, 209, 213 passim.

202 *XFFL*, *j*. 197–201 passim and 204/1a–9b, 199/18b–21a.

203 *XFFL*, 205/20a–27a, 209/1a–9a, 211/15b–23a, 212/1a–5a.

204 *XFFL*, 205/20a–30a, 211/15b–23a, 213/8a–12b.

205 *XFFL*, 196/19a–22b, 197/11a–14b, 201/3b–5b, 201/27b–32a, 203/16a–17b, 207/28b–31a, 208/1a–10a, 209/9a–14a, 211/23a–26b.

206 Jiaqing had been unhappy about Taibu's slow clearing of Zhang Hanchao's remnants, his lenient treatment of surrendered rebels—Taibu had used a no-kill policy as a selling point to lure surrender—and his ineffective work in supplying Eldemboo's troops. *XFFL*, 149/7a–9a, 181/11a–14a, and *j*. 183–84 passim. Taibu was sent to Xining as an imperial commissioner. Lu Youren was named the new governor of Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 204/19b–20a, 206/1a–3b.

207 *XFFL*, 213/16a–19b.
208 Jiaqing gave Qingcheng a "severe reprimand" for arriving at the crossing spot late, catching only the last batch of Ran's men in the middle of their crossing. *XFFL*, 214/22b–31a, 215/16b–24a.
209 Again, most rebels had crossed by the time Qingcheng arrived. But Jiaqing dismissed Guan Teng, who had been responsible for the river defense. *XFFL*, 213/1a–8a, 216/9a–20a, 218/15a–22b, 218/27b–37a.
210 *XFFL*, 217/9b–14b.
211 *XFFL*, 216/1a–4a, 216/9a–17b, 217/1a–3b, 218/15a–24b.
212 *XFFL*, 213/7a, 215/26a–29b, 216/17b–20a, 217/4b–7b, 217/14b–16a, 218/27b–37a.
213 Taibu mentioned in the early autumn that the reasons Eldemboo did not ask for reinforcements were the low quality of the new solders and a shortage of funds. *XFFL* 191/31b–36b.
214 *XFFL*, 218/27b–37a.
215 *XFFL*, 198/1a–6b. Although other estimations varied between five and seven thousand, Hongfeng put the coalition's size at one to two thousand. *XFFL*, 147/24a–26b.
216 *XFFL*, 148/15a–20b, 149/29b–38a, 150/32b–34b, 153/5a–10b, 153/11a–b; *JQQJZ*, 5:80–81; GZDJQ, 4724, 4878, 4927, 5124.
217 *XFFL*, 154/22b–26b, 156/1a–8a, 158/10a–13b.
218 According to rebel captives, Fan Renjie wanted to go back to Xiangyang, but Xu Tiande intended a return to Sichuan. *XFFL*, 154/22b–26b. Late in the spring, Xian Dachuan and Long Shaozhou had also found their way into Hubei, attempting to merge with Xu, but they failed to do so. *XFFL*, 160/17b–19b, 161/36a–37a, 165/17a–19b, 168/10b–15a.
219 *XFFL*, 150/4b–10a, 151/19b–23a, 153/11a–b. Songyun asked to have two hundred to three hundred Solon horsemen from Eldemboo sent to Hubei, but Jiaqing declined the request. *XFFL*, 158/5b–10a.
220 Jiaqing told Wu to keep watching Mingliang and Wesibu. *XFFL*, 162/1a–5b, 169/9a–12a, 165/17a–19b, 171/15b–26b. GZDJQ, 5261, 5345, 5415.
221 The titles were guardsman wearing blue feathers (*lanling shiwei*) and regiment leader (*lingdui dachen*). *XFFL*, 162/3b–4b, 162/5b–8b; *QSLJQ*, 62/25a–b.
222 Jiaqing endorsed Mingliang's requests for two thousand troops from Guangxi and ten officers from Beijing but declined to give Mingliang several hundred of Eldemboo's Solon cavalrymen. *XFFL*, 169/23a–30b.
223 *XFFL*, 172/14b–25b, 175/4b–10b, and *j*. 176 passim; *JQQJZ*, 5:268.
224 *QSLJQ*, 62/25a–b; *XFFL*, 158/7b–10a, 162/6a–8b, 173/2a–3a, and *j*. 178–82, 186, 189 passim.
225 *XFFL j*. 190–95 passim and 206/12b–18a.
226 When he arrived at the Nansha River on the same day the rebels crossed the river, Mingliang halted by the bank, saying that no boats were available, although the water was only knee-high. Then Mingliang made an uproar about the local soldiers and militiamen stopping his men because the former could not determine their identity, which resulted in a series of dismissals of local officials and officers there. *XFFL*, 196/22b–27b, 197/1a–3b, 198/1a–8b, 200/10b–17b, 200/18b–20, 217/20a–25a, 217/30b.
227 *XFFL*, 202/9a–12a, 201/22a–27b.
228 Jiang Sheng proposed that 450 of those bannermen go to Fangxian to help Wesibu and that the remaining 1,050 bannermen go to Mingliang. Jiaqing agreed. On the deployment of the bannermen, see *XFFL*, *j*. 194, 196, 197, 199, 201, 202.
229 *XFFL*, 197/3b–4b, 197/5b–6b.

230 *XFFL*, 196/27b–29b, *j*. 202–5 passim, 207/1a–6b. Deying'e had avoided this battle, and returned to his garrison, claiming he was wounded. Jiaqing dismissed him and ordered him escorted to Lebao and Delengtai to have his wounds examined. *XFFL*, 203/35b–37b.

231 *XFFL*, *j*. 202–7 passim, 209/16a–17b.

232 Mingliang argued that staying at Fengxi enabled him to watch for the rebels from both Sichuan and Shaanxi, and that he would have left Hubei vulnerable had he gone to Sichuan. He again complained about the size of his force and that only 40 to 50 percent of the 450 cavalrymen had horses. *XFFL*, 209/15a–16a, 210/1a–6a, 211/9b–13a, 212/9b–11a.

233 Mingliang was demoted to guardsman wearing blue feathers. *QSLJQ*, 75/18a; *XFFL*, 205/14a–16b, 205/18a–20a, 210/6a–8a, 211/13a–15a.

234 *XFFL*, 205/18a–20a, 208/8b–9a, 208/14a–16b.

235 *XFFL*, 203/9b–10b. In the late Qianlong period, Cangling had been on Fuk'anggan's staff in several wars.

236 On 05/10/02, Cangling gained his first victory in Xunyang. A week after, Cangling fought again near Baojiadian, Zhuxi. Days later, he attacked the Gao-Ma band again and pursued the rebels all night following a six-hour fight. Then Cangling took a shortcut to catch the rebels and fought another battle. *XFFL*, *j*. 208, 211, 212/1a–5a. On 05/10/17, Mingliang and Wesibu rushed from Fengxi to Baofeng to attack the remainder of the Gao-Ma band and had an easy victory; Mingliang claimed to have killed and caught over a thousand rebels. When Cangling arrived, he and Mingliang chased the band to Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 212/11b–16a, 212/19a–22a, 215/1a–5b.

237 *XFFL*, 208/30a–33a, 211/5a–9a, 212/5a–7b.

238 *XFFL*, 215/24a–29b, 218/1a–5b.

239 While returning to Hubei, Cangling had left a thousand Guangdong and Guangxi soldiers and one-hundred-plus of his last five hundred bannermen to guard the county seat of Zhuxi. *XFFL*, 118/9b–13a.

240 Jiaqing also gave back Mingliang's positions of guardsman of the third rank and regiment's leader. *XFFL*, 208/11b–14a, 212/16a–18b, 212/22a–23b, 215/1a–7a, 215/24a–29b.

241 *XFFL*, 215/1a–5b, 217/9b–14b, 218/1a–5b, 218/9b–14a.

242 Jiang Sheng was transferred to the post of governor-general of Zhili. *XFFL*, 215/29b–31b.

243 Šulin was a half elder brother of Guwangheo and Guwanghing. Having participated in the second Jinchuan war, he nevertheless spent most of his career in the civil bureaucracy. After Hešen's purge, Jiaqing first appointed Šulin to head the Ministry of Personnel but soon made him governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang. He also granted Šulin the right to ride a horse inside the Forbidden City, a high honor reserved to the most trusted high-ranking officials. *JQQJZ*, 4:140, 164.

244 On Jiaqing's purported reforms early in his reign, see Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, chaps. 3–6.

245 *XFFL*, 162/19b–20a.

246 Meanwhile, Jiaqing had paid less attention to his harem; he did not produce any offspring until early 1805. Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, 539.

247 At the beginning of 1800, Wu Xiongguang sent agents to Xiangyang to examine the local defense and the residents' reaction, and then reported to the throne. GZDJQ, 5124. When Wu was appointed governor-general of Huguang in 1801, Jiaqing praised him for the accuracy of the intelligence he reported. *XFFL*, 256/20a–21a.

248 *QSLJQ*, 37/29b–30b, 38/26b; *XFFL*, 88/23b–24a, 88/30b–31a, 89/23b–24a,

98/29a.

249 Jiaqing once admitted that it was difficult for him to command operations because the situation at the front often had changed by the time his directives reached there. *XFFL*, 173/30a–b.

250 Jiaqing mentioned this in late autumn 1800 in an edict. *XFFL*, 199/17a–b.

251 *XFFL*, 144/24b–29b.

252 Kuilun had proposed exiling Funing to Xinjiang, but Jiaqing changed the sentence to letting him serve as a foot soldier without pay. In the wake of the Jialing River crossing, Jiaqing blamed Funing for cutting the militias along the Jialing River and exiled him to Ili but did not pursue the 1796 incident. *XFFL*, 149/38a–40a, 152/27b, 164/33a–37b; *QSG*, 11174–75.

253 *XFFL*, 150/22a–23b.

254 Zhang Xiaoyuan's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:111–16.

255 *XFFL*, 215/13a–15b.

256 On Zeng Jing's case, see Spence, *Treason by the Book*.

257 *XFFL*, 210/21b–25a, 215/7b–12a, 216/21b–24b.

258 *XFFL* 271/15b–16a.

259 Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, 228–51.

260 *JQQJZ*, 4:14.

261 *QSLJQ*, 65/2a–3b. On Hong's short exile in Xinjiang, see Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing China*, 147–52, and 196.

262 Lü, “Hong Beijiang,” 31–36.
263 *QSLJQ*, 68/24b–25a; *XFFL*, 182/29b.
264 *XFFL*, 182/35a–38b.
265 *JQSYD*, 4:501. Guan Wenfa argues that Jiaqing made the statement to avert criticism, so one should not take it at face value. But Guan also acknowledges that it at least suggests Jiaqing’s retreat from his reformist intent. Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, 113–14 and 571–72.
266 Jiaqing’s comment on Zhou’s memorial on 05/03/22, GZDJQ, 5937.

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Epigraph: *XFFLXB*, 27/24b–26a.
1 *XFFL*, 210/21b–25a.
2 *XFFL*, 218/27b–37a, 220/8a–12a, 223/17a–19a, 224/32b–36a, 226/13a–21b, 227/41a–46a, 229/30a–32a.
3 The prizes were as high as 1,000 to 2,000 taels in addition to promotion or an officer’s position. *XFFL*, 230/10b–14a. Jiaqing had just repeated his promise to pardon the rebel chiefs the day after New Year’s Day. *XFFL*, 227/14b–17a.
4 *XFFL*, 223/24b–30a.
5 *XFFL*, 223/34b–38b.
6 *XFFL*, 219/15a–16b, 220/1a–4b, 222/7b–9b.
7 *XFFL*, 220/4b–8a, 221/20b–23b, 222/10a–12a.
8 In this battle in Quxian and Yilong, the Qing forces reportedly killed three to four thousand rebels, including two chiefs, Yang Kaidi and Qi Guomo. *XFFL*, 223/1a–10a, 223/13a–15a. But the figure is dubious.
9 Qishiwu told Delengtai that, in addition to a rebel band consisting of three to four thousand people on the border, several bands from Shaanxi had reached Guangyuan. *XFFL*, 224/26a–32b.
10 *XFFL*, 224/26a–32b, 226/6b–13a.
11 But Jiaqing endorsed Delengtai’s leaving for Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 224/32b–36a, 226/13a–17a.
12 *XFFL*, 224/26a–32b, 226/6b–13a, 226/13a–17a.
13 *XFFL*, 226/13a–17a, 228/18a–24b.
14 *XFFL*, *j*. 226–33.
15 *XFFL*, 231/33b–36b, 232/11a–12b, 233/29a–40a, 235/3b–8b.
16 Some captured rebels said that Fan Renjie rolled down a cliff on 06/02/06. *XFFL*, 239/3b.
17 *XFFL*, *j*. 236–47 passim and 250/10b–14b.
18 In the third month, Xue Dalie and Ahabao eliminated a band of nine hundred of Zhang Hanchao’s remnants that had hidden in the Daba Mountains for months. *XFFL*, 247/12b–18b.
19 Liu Chaoxuan’s confession, *BLJZL*, 5:138–39; Tang Sijiao’s confession, pp. 144–45.
20 The Tang-Liu band was pursued in Hubei first by Ahabao and then by Qishiwu. *XFFL*, *j*. 243–59 passim.
21 *XFFL*, 226/40a–41b.
22 *XFFL*, 228/18a–24b, 231/36b–41a.
23 *XFFL*, 241/18b–21a, *j*. 246–58 passim, and 275/10b–12b.
24 *XFFL*, 252/4a.
25 *XFFL*, 228/26b–27a.
26 *XFFL*, 236/8b–9b, 250/15a–16a. For Jiaqing’s warnings, see *XFFL*, 228/24b–27b, 231/43b–45a, 232/17a–19b, 236/15b–16a, 239/6b–8a, 243/17a–18b.
27 The six-hour battle was at Jiaozhanya, which literally meant “Battle Valley,”

and it left both sides with considerable casualties. Gao turned back to Fangxian afterward. *XFFL*, 220/13b–18a, 218/5b–7b, 218/42b–43b.

28 The number of able-bodied "spearmen" in the band varied from two thousand to four to five thousand in the records. Xu also had several hundred horses, thirty cannons, and two hundred muskets. *XFFL*, 221/8a–12a, 224/4a, 225/23b–24b.

29 *XFFL*, 221/23b–26b, 234/19b–20b. For Jiaqing's high regard of Šulin, see *XFFL*, 218/8b, 226/5b.

30 *XFFL*, 218/7b–8b, 222/12b–15a, 224/11b–14a.

31 *XFFL*, 224/6b–11b.

32 For his contributions in the battle, Jiaqing promoted Mingliang to imperial guardsman of the second grade. *XFFL*, 224/14a–18b, 226/1a–4b, 226/26b–35a.

33 *XFFL*, *j.* 226–28 passim and 234/12a–13b.

34 *XFFL*, 231/1a–7a, 234/1a–7a, 234/19a–25a.

35 *XFFL*, 282/5a–b.

36 *XFFL*, 236/26a–37a.

37 *XFFL*, 243/1a–12b, 245/1a–8b.

38 *XFFL*, 234/16a–17a, 234/19a–27a, 238/18a–25a, 238/28b–32b, 241/1a–8a, 241/15b–18b.

39 He did not set out until 06/02/16. *XFFL*, 240/14b–17b, 242/12a–21a.

40 *XFFL*, 239/16b–19b, 240/14b–17b, 242/12a–21a, 244/1a–10a, 244/21a–27a, 246/25b–31b.

41 *XFFL*, 249/1a–5b, 250/20b–29a.

42 According to Delengtai, Xu still had two thousand people, and the combined band led by Fan, Zeng, and Chen had three thousand people. *XFFL*, 251/1a–2a, 251/22b–25b, 252/ab–15b.

43 Regretting that that he had not been able to complete the campaign, Šulin instructed before death that his corpse not be buried in his official uniform. *XFFL*, 250/29a–33a. Jiaqing had praised Šulin for his dedication and had been satisfied with his arrangements in Hubei. *XFFL*, 226/31b–32a, 227/9b–12b, 231/18a–20b.

44 Šulin suggested using militias to guard villages but leaving the barren mountains unguarded. *XFFL*, 227/1a–5b. Delengtai suggested instead keeping all twelve to thirteen thousand troops as mobile forces divided into two divisions stationed near the borders with Shaanxi and Sichuan. *XFFL*, 252/ab–17b. Neither plan was implemented.

45 *XFFL*, 228/29a, 231/15a–17b. Knowing their relationship, Jiaqing had expected that Šulin would reinvigorate Mingliang. 226/31b–35a.

46 *XFFL*, 239/14b–15a.

47 When Long Shaozhou was stopped by the Guandu River in Zhushan, Delengtai's men did not try to annihilate them and did not cross the river themselves until a floating bridge was built. Jiaqing scolded Delengtai bitterly for his delays. *XFFL*, 246/18b–25b, 246/32a–34b.

48 *XFFL*, 245/6a–8b.

49 *XFFL*, 254/19b–20b, 254/23b–25a. Wesibu was soon escorted to Beijing for trial.

50 *XFFL*, 250/33a–34a, 251/2b–3b, 254/35a–37a.

51 *XFFL*, 222/15a–27a, 225/18b–26a, 227/24a–36a, 233/1a–4a, 235/1a–5b.

52 *XFFL*, *j.* 218–21 passim.

53 *XFFL*, 227/24a–36a.

54 *XFFL*, *j.* 223–32 and 235 passim.

55 Estimates of the band's size varied between two and five thousand. They seized several boats, but many forded the shallow river. For their failure to guard the

river, Qingcheng and several other officers and the local officials were reprimanded and punished. *XFFL*, 224/1a–b and *j*. 227–36 passim.

56 The rebels used seized boats for their women and children, but the rest waded through the river. *XFFL*, 244/14a–16a.

57 *XFFL*, *j*. 229–30.

58 Delengtai claimed that he killed and captured thousands in the two battles. Jiaqing returned to Delengtai the noble title of first-grade viscount, promoted Delengtai's son, Suchonga, to imperial guardsman of the first grade, and showered his army with awards. *XFFL*, *j*. 227–33 passim; Ma Yingxiang's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:117.

59 *XFFL*, 237/12a–18b.

60 *XFFL*, 227/14b–17a.

61 Wesingge was vice minister of the Court of Judicial Review (Dalisi), and Qiu Xingjian was vice minister of the Court of the Imperial Stud (Taipusi). *XFFL*, 230/10b–14a, 230/15a–b.

62 *XFFL*, 235/27b–31b, 236/23a–25b, 237/19a–22a.

63 *XFFL*, *j*. 232–42; Wang Linggao's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:118; GZDJQ, 19776.

64 In addition to rewarding Yang, Geshebu, as well as Eldemboo, Jiaqing also granted favors to leading grand councilors, personnel in the central government who processed war correspondence, and crews at the postal stations who delivered the good news. *XFFL*, 240/30b–33b, 240/33b–35a, 240/35a–b.

65 *XFFL*, 242/31b–34a; Wang Tingzhao's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:120–27. Likely, Wang created the myth about his grandfather to make himself seem more appealing.

66 On how to use those records, see Naquin, "True Confessions."

67 *XFFL*, *j*. 240–53 passim; Wang Linggao's and Zhang Shen's confessions, *BLJZL*, 5:118–19.

68 Xu Tiande's corpse was later recovered by Delengtai's troops. *XFFL*, *j*. 254–61 passim.

69 Encouraged by Yan Ruyi, Xunyang's magistrate, the local militias joined the fight against Chen's band. *XFFL*, 251/25b–28b, 254/3b–10b, 256/7b–14a.

70 *XFFL*, *j*. 237, 238, 240, and 242–63 passim.

71 *XFFL*, 285/6b–10b.

72 *XFFL*, *j*. 248–56 passim.

73 *XFFL*, *j*. 241–45 passim and 248/5b–8b.

74 *XFFL*, 247/20a–28a.

75 The uprising was staged in the third month by the sectarian society "Qiaoqiaohui," literally meaning "secret society," which was created in the late Qianlong period and had been active in Shaanxi's Fengxiang prefecture. The Shaanxi forces speedily suppressed the uprising. *XFFL*, 246/8a–17b. Also see Suzuki, *Sennen ōkkuteki*, 299–300.

76 *XFFL*, 247/28a–29b, 249/15a–21a.

77 *XFFL*, 247/1a–9a, 248/1a–5b, 250/1a–10a, 251/28a–b; Ran Xuesheng's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:130.

78 *XFFL*, 251/11a–14b, 253/17a–22a.

79 *XFFL*, *j*. 251–66 passim; Ran Xuesheng's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:130.

80 *XFFL*, 254/10b–13a, 254/20b–23b, and *j*. 237–55 passim.

81 *XFFL*, 241/25a–26b, 243/22b–23b, 244/19a–21a, 247/30a–34a, 250/9b–10a, 254/1a–3a, 255/15b–16a, 256/24a–25a, 259/8a–11b.

82 *XFFL*, 251/14b–17b.

83 *XFFL*, 245/27b–29b.

84 *XFFL*, 253/8a.

85 Their report reached the emperor on 06/05/02. Their suggestions included stationing troops along the plank trail and in Baoji and Fengxiang, examining and registering all militiamen and limiting further hiring, having the Manchu and Chinese troops in Xi'an undergo training, and having all promotion requests in all three theaters go through Eldemboo. *XFFL*, 253/5a–17a.
86 *XFFL*, 251/21a–22b, 253/24b–28b, 254/20b–23b, 258/15b–17b, 260/23a–26a.
87 *XFFL*, 266/9a–10b.
88 In one of the battles, Yang Yuchun and Gebushe captured Ran Tianshi and Wang Shihu. *XFFL*, *j*. 245–85 passim; GZDJQ, 5547.
89 Delengtai said that many of his soldiers had no shoes and that one-third of his six thousand troops suffered either from illness or from swollen and damaged legs or feet, many having died. *XFFL*, 269/8b–11a, 272/15b–26a, 277/22a–24b.
90 *XFFL*, 266/19b–21b, 267/35b–38a, 269/11a–12b, 272/26a–28a, 277/24b–26a.
91 *XFFL*, 253/26b–33b and *j*. 264–80 passim.
92 *XFFL*, *j*. 260–66 passim.
93 *XFFL*, *j*. 260–69 passim; Xin Dou's Confession, *BLJZL*, 5:131–32.
94 For the eliminating of Ran Xuesheng, Lebao regained his first-rank hat trappings and received a third-grade barondom. *XFFL*, 270/22a–32a.
95 *XFFL*, *j*. 271–75, 282–85 passim; Xin Dou's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:131–32; Wei Hongsheng's confession, p. 136; GZDJQ, 5711.
96 *XFFL*, *j*. 267–84 passim; Liu Chaoxuan's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:139; Tang Sijiao's confession, p. 145.
97 *XFFL*, *j*. 255–56, 259–65 passim.
98 *XFFL*, 261/16b; *QSLJQ*, 83/31b.
99 *XFFL*, *j*. 268–85 passim.
100 *XFFL*, 280/7b–8a.
101 *XFFL*, *j*. 264–75 passim.
102 *XFFL*, 266/10b–13a.
103 One month later, the total number was down to 19,000, according to Delengtai. *XFFL*, 270/5a–9b. Soon after, the number went down first to fewer than 10,000 and then to 7,000 to 8,000. *XFFL*, 271/12b–15b, 276/11a–12b.
104 *XFFL*, 270/9b–13a, 274/9a–11b, 279/24a–25b.
105 *XFFL*, 284/7a–9a.
106 *XFFL*, 280/12b–17b. Shortly after, Lebao and Delengtai also reported their plans to repatriate the armies. *XFFL*, 283/7b–8b. Two months earlier, Eldemboo had already planned on sending back the Manchurian bannermen, to which Jiaqing agreed, providing detailed instructions. *XFFL*, 271/10b–12b, 271/14b–15b.
107 Jiaqing granted Eldemboo the rank of earl of the third grade and Delengtai that of earl of the second grade and gave a yellow reindeer hide jacket to each. *XFFL*, 280/26a–31a.
108 *XFFL*, 283/22a–24a, 283/29b–32a.
109 *XFFL*, 283/24a–27a.
110 *XFFL*, 283/32a–33a, 283/35b–36b, 284/15b–23b.
111 The most recent time was when he approved Eldemboo's request for promotions of local officials. *XFFL*, 283/32a–33a.
112 He ruled that militiamen having neither family nor property were to reclaim virgin land in the mountains or work in the copper and salt industries. *XFFL*, 284/27b–28b, 284/38a–40a.
113 Gou's younger sister was married to Luo's younger brother.
114 *XFFL*, *j*. 267–86 passim.

115 *XFFL*, 284/14b–15b, 285/1a–6b, 285/14a–19a, 289/11b–12b.
116 *XFFL*, 286/2a–14a.
117 *XFFL*, *j.* 286–89 passim; GZDJQ, 6732, 6780.
118 Changlin sent 2,200 troops to Gansu and went there himself to head the logistics. *XFFL*, *j.* 288–89 passim.
119 Their reason for not going to Gansu was that they were waiting to pincer attack Gou once he was forced back to Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 287/1a–7b, 288/15a–18b, 289/1a–14a, 289/24b–30a; GZDJQ, 6874.
120 *XFFL*, 289/89b.
121 Even though some of them had rifles (*niaoqian*), they could not use them without ammunition. They carried them only for the purpose of disguising themselves as troops when stealing supplies. Zhou Shihong's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:161.
122 *XFFL*, 290/9a.
123 However, some of Long's men deserted or surrendered because of the agents. *XFFL*, 264/13b–14b, 264/16a–18a, 269/6a–b.
124 Delengtai slaughtered nearly 700 captives, including 9 executed by slotting and slicing, after a battle against Long Shaozhou in Daning in early 1801. *XFFL*, 244/6b. Shortly after, following a battle in Hubei's Xingshan against Xu Tiande and Gou Wenming, Delengtai and Cangling slaughtered 473 rebels and executed 5 chiefs by "a thousand cuts." *XFFL*, 250/26a–b. Early in 1801, after a battle against Fan Renjie, Lebao executed 7 rebel chiefs by "a thousand cuts" and slaughtered 378 rebels. *XFFL*, 233/34b–35a. Late in 1801, after a battle against Li Bin's band in Dazhou, Yang Yuchuan executed nearly 400 captives. *XFFL*, 282/6a–b.
125 *XFFL*, 299/8b–9b.
126 *XFFL*, 289/31a–33b, 290/4b–10b, 291/1a–5b, 291/12a–14b, 292/4a–6b.
127 *XFFL*, 289/17b–23a.
128 They tried to justify Qishiwu's delays with excuses, praised Qishiwu for expelling Gou from Gansu in a dozen days, and mentioned that he had been injured fifteen times and that his troops were crying when he was arrested. *XFFL*, 289/30a–31a, 290/12a–13a, 291/6b–9b, 291/14b–16a; GZDJQ, 6953. Late in the summer, Qishiwu was called back to Beijing when he was incapacitated by his wounds. *XFFL*, 327/41b–44a.
129 In fact, Jiaqing had previously criticized Eldemboo for protecting his officers, urging him to investigate Qishiwu and discipline Wang Zilu, an officer who had failed to stop the rebels in the area he guarded. *XFFL*, 285/14a–19a. As Wang again failed to stop Gou Wenming from entering Sichuan, Eldemboo proposed the death penalty for Wang and dismissal for another officer. Eldemboo and Delengtai also requested to demote an officer to soldier. *XFFL*, 289/24b–30a, 289/33b–36b, 291/9b–12a, 291/16a–b.
130 *XFFL*, 290/24a–b and *j.* 293 passim.
131 *XFFL*, 292/20b–26b.
132 *XFFL*, 290/26b–28b, 292/27b–30a.
133 *XFFL*, 288/18b–20b, 288/24a–b, 294/16a–19b.
134 Eldemboo said that he did not want to use all the forces to pursue the shattered rebels and that he would "move slowly according to the circumstances." *XFFL*, 293/20b.
135 *XFFL*, 296/1a–5a, 296/7–10a.
136 *XFFL*, 297/6b–18b.
137 *XFFL*, 296/18b–20b. 297/18b–24b; GZDJQ 7471.
138 *XFFL*, 297/24b–27b.
139 There were only two rebel groups in the north. One was roaming in the

Qinling Mountains, but one of its chiefs, Xin Cong, was captured early in the first month. The other band was the one that crossed the Han River shortly before the New Year. *XFFL*, *j*. 291–97 passim.

140 Jiaqing assigned Eldemboo and Yang Yuchun to clear the north of the Han River and Qingcheng and Qingpu to be responsible for the rebels south of the river. For Sichuan, he split the responsibilities between Delengtai (for eastern Sichuan) and Lebao and Saicungga (for northern Sichuan). Jiaqing was even willing to endorse reinforcement requests if necessary. *XFFL*, 298/14a–25b.

141 Jiaqing promised Eldemboo to call him back to Beijing once the campaign ended. *XFFL*, 300/13a–15b.

142 *XFFL*, 293/5b–8a, *j*. 299–300, 304–5, 310–17 passim; GZDJQ, 7546, 7654, 7713, 8003.

143 *XFFL*, 300/28a–30a, 309/7b–10a.

144 *XFFL*, 311/31a–33b, 313/8a–9a, 315/7b–9a, 317/19b–21b.

145 *XFFL*, 319/8b–14a.

146 Those rewards ranged between 500 and 2,000 taels of silver in addition to promotions for troops and immunity from punishment for rebels. *XFFL*, 319/16b–20b.

147 *XFFL*, 319/20b–21b. In fact, Jiaqing had earlier instructed Lu to report secretly on all the generals in Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 295/40a–b.

148 *XFFL*, 290/10b–12a and *j*. 292–303 passim.

149 *XFFL*, 290/17a–21a.

150 *XFFL*, 90/21a–24a, 291/21b–23a, 292/17b–19b, 298/14a–16b, 299/24a–25a, 301/12b–15b.

151 *XFFL*, 345/1a–4b.

152 Hu Mingyuan's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:150–51; Zhao Congguan's Confession, *BLJZL*, 5:157.

153 *XFFL*, 290/3a–4b, 339/4b–5a.

154 *XFFL*, 292/6b–13a, 295/1a–5a, 295/10b–12b, 311/6a; Zhao Congguan's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:157–59; Zhang Shihu's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:154–55.

155 According to Delengtai and the commanders in Hubei, those regrouped rebels amounted to four thousand, and three thousand of them were "spearmen." But Wu Xiongguang thought that only one thousand were true insurgents. *XFFL*, 309/22b–23b.

156 *XFFL*, 291/5b–6a and *j*. 297–99, 302, 305 passim.

157 *XFFL*, 302/9a–11b, 305/16b–18b.

158 *XFFL*, *j*. 300–12 passim.

159 *XFFL*, *j*. 307–9, 311–12 passim.

160 The core of Pu's band was two hundred men from Chen Chaoguan's Blue Band. After Chen was killed, Chen's two sons became the band's nominal leaders, but Pu was their mastermind. *XFFL*, *j*. 313–16, 318 passim.

161 Jiaqing instructed Delengtai and his colleagues to take advantage of the rains, reminding them of Xu Tiande's drowning the previous summer in Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 320/3a–10b.

162 Fan's body was never identified because the corpses on the riverbanks had been severely damaged. *XFFL*, 321/1a–10b, and *j*. 322–24 passim.

163 After his arrest in the summer of 1802, Zhang Shihu said of Fan Renjie: "We all listened to his call. Whenever a letter arrived, what he said was obeyed. He was among the most senior people along with Liu Zhixie, Wang Tingzhao, and Li Shu." Zhang Shihu's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:155.

164 Jiaqing upgraded Delengtai's noble rank to that of marquis of the third grade. *XFFL*, 321/18a–21a.

165 *XFFL*, 319/28a–31b, 320/1a–3a, 320/15a–23b.

166 *XFFL*, 322/24a–26b.
167 Initially Jiaqing set up 07/07/20 as the deadline. Eldemboo asked for an extension to the end of the seventh month; Jiaqing agreed only reluctantly. *XFFL*, *j*. 323–24 and 326 passim.
168 *XFFL*, *j*. 327–29, 331 passim; Gou Chaojiu's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:164; GZDJQ, 8417, 8553.
169 Rawski, *Last Emperors*, 19–21.
170 *XFFL*, 328/21b–26a, 329/6b–10a. For Jiaqing's attention to Yang, see *XFFL*, 173/29b–33b, 181/16b–18b, 191/31b–33b, 191/35a–b, 207/28b–31a.
171 In Shaanxi, Eldemboo had begun repatriating bannermen and Green Standard troops before Gou's death. *XFFL*, 327/8b–11a, 331/18a–21b, 338/34b–36a. Lebao also repatriated the Green Standard troops from Shanxi and Guangdong but kept those from Yunnan and Guizhou. *XFFL*, 326/15b–19b.
172 Jiaqing first expressed these concerns soon after he took the reins of government in early 1799. *QSLJQ*, 79/30a–b.
173 *XFFL*, 134/6a–7a.
174 *XFFL*, 135/15a–16a.
175 *XFFL*, 159/22b–25b.
176 Late in 1800, Jiaqing said that he had sent numerous edicts on the matter to the war leaders, but had not received any detailed and feasible proposal. *XFFL*, 217/3b–4b.
177 *XFFL*, 240/35b–38a.
178 The response from Lu Youren arrived first. It was followed, days after, by Lebao's proposal and a joint memorial from Changlin and Lu. *XFFL*, 248/16b–20a, 249/8b–12b, 264/18b–25a.
179 *XFFL*, 264/18b–25a, 267/1a–5a.
180 *XFFL*, 323/7b–8a.
181 Xingkui delivered the edict to Eldemboo on 07/09/01. Then Xingkui went to Hanzhong and relayed Jiaqing's instruction on cutting the militias to Lu Youren orally and "in secret." *XFFL*, 340/6b–8b. Shortly after, Jiaqing appointed Xingkui the Xi'an general.
182 *XFFL*, 323/29a–32a, 324/17a–20b, 326/11b–12a, 327/16b–17b, 328/26a–27b.
183 *XFFL*, 328/8b–16a.
184 *XFFL*, 324/19a–b, 328/18b–21b.
185 *XFFL*, 329/27a–29a, 331/24a–b, 334/32a–33a, 335/18b–19a.
186 *XFFL*, 335/27b–30a. In his memorial shortly after, Eldemboo depicted a similarly upbeat picture; 336/23b–24a.
187 *XFFL*, 336/31b–32a, 339/29b–31a, 346/22b–24b.
188 Wu sent a circuit intendant to Zhuxi and Xiangyang's prefect to Yunyang to receive the discharged militias. *XFFL*, 339/5a–6a.
189 *XFFL*, 336/1a–3b, 343/9a–14b, 343/16a–b, 343/18b–21a.
190 *XFFL*, 324/13a–16a, 337/10a–11b.
191 Delengtai also claimed that there were still twenty thousand guardsmen militiamen in the three provinces. Again, the figure may be a largely deflated one. *XFFL* 329/17b–24a.
192 Among the 1,300 cut militiamen, most returned to their homes in the Qinling Mountains—they all had either property or a livelihood. Fifty-three were sent back to their homes in Chenggu, Yangxian, and Xixiang; 33 were sent back to Hubei; and more than 100 were sent back to Sichuan. Only 24 joined army. *XFFL*, 326/7a–b, 327/8b–11a, 334/24a–25b, 336/5b–6b, 336/13a–16a, 338/34b–37a, 339/9b–10a.
193 *XFFL*, 339/29b–31a, 339/32b.
194 Lebao claimed that all the guardsmen militiamen had been cut in Sichuan, but

it was apparently not true. In Shaanxi, Lu Youren also gave the impression that most guardsmen militiamen had been cut. He said that only 10 to 20 percent of the guardsmen militiamen remained by the seventh month and that he continued to cut them. *XFFL*, 330/20a–b, 338/3a–b, 341/16b–17a, 343/24a–b. However, at the end of 1802, shortly before he died, Lu reported that most guardsmen in southwestern Shaanxi had been cut, but those in the southeastern part of the province, for example, in Ziyang and Pingli, had not been cut. *XFFL*, 347/26a–27b.

195 According to Delengtai, another 30,000 to 40,000 militias had been cut during 1803 and there were still 4,000 to 5,000 militiamen left. *XFFLXB*, 22/45b–46a. Therefore, at least 35,000 to 45,000 militiamen were still employed by the end of 1802. The real figure could be higher.

196 *XFFL*, 339/29b–31a, 346/22b–25a.

197 See note 192.

198 Arguing that most of the expeditionary militiamen were from Sichuan, Delengtai demanded more positions in Sichuan to accommodate them, since among ten thousand new Green Standard positions that had been created in the three provinces, only one thousand were in Sichuan. Jiaqing instructed Eldemboo and the viceroys of the three provinces to deliberate on it. *XFFL* 329/17b–24a, 329/27a–29a. But there was no follow-up from either Eldemboo or any of the viceroys.

199 *XFFL*, 311/8a–b, 311/11a.

200 Per Wu Xiongguang's report. *XFFL*, 333/16a–17b.

201 Fang Weidian admitted in 1804 that, in Shaanxi, some of the cut militias had escaped on the way home or had left home again after being sent back. *XFFLXB*, 27/24b–26a.

202 On 07/06/23, Luo Siju captured Liu Chaoxuan in Daning and wiped out his band of four hundred. For this, Jiaqing rewarded Lebao with the noble rank of baron of the first grade. *XFFL*, 325/1a–10b. Tang Sijiao was captured in the tenth month. *XFFL*, 345/19a–24b.

203 *XFFL*, *j*. 319, 321–23, 339, 342, 344–45, and 347 passim.

204 *XFFL*, *j*. 322–27 and 329–33 passim, 329/24a–27a.

205 *XFFL*, 333/9b–12b.

206 *XFFL*, *j*. 334–36 passim. Shortly before Pu's demise, Tang Daxin, a senior rebel chief from Sichuan, had died jumping off a cliff in Badong when pursued by troops. *XFFL*, 334/33a–b, 339/1a–3b.

207 *XFFL*, 334/16a–19a and *j*. 336–39 passim.

208 On Eldemboo's trip to Hubei, *XFFL*, *j*. 336–41, 343, and 346 passim.

209 *XFFL*, *j*. 339–41 passim.

210 *XFFL*, 279/1a–3a.

211 *XFFL*, 287/18a–20a.

212 *XFFL*, 329/10a–11b, 331/21b–23b.

213 *XFFL*, 334/19a–21a, 334/31a–32a, 335/6b–8a, 335/23a–b, 338/31a–34b.

214 *XFFL*, 339/44a–b, 340/22b–28a, 341/26a–28a, 343/8a–9a.

215 *XFFL*, 335/21b–23a.

216 Meanwhile, Jiaqing showered Eldemboo and Delengtai with gifts and granted hundreds of silver plaques to their troops. *XFFL*, 338/31a–34b.

217 *XFFL*, 339/3b–4a.

218 *XFFL*, 342/10b–18b.

219 *XFFL*, 339/44a–b, 340/22b–28a, 341/26a–28a, 343/8a–9a.

220 *XFFL*, 348/29a–32a.

221 *XFFL*, 347/20b–23b, 348/32a, 349/7a–8b, 349/18b–21b.

222 Dai was killed, and another chief was captured, but Cui and Hu had left the

band the previous night. Days after, Cui was arrested in Baokang. *XFFL*, 350/22a–b, 350/26b–27b, 351/46b–49b; Cui Zonghe's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:148.

223 *XFFL*, 348/1a–9b.

224 *XFFL*, *j*. 341–42, 345–46, 348–49 passim.

225 Cangling fell seriously ill and was called back to Beijing. *XFFL*, 337/11b–14a, 338/37a–38a, 339/40a–41b, 339/45b–47b. Sun was injured by a horse's kick. *XFFL*, 342/20a–27b.

226 *XFFL*, 339/42a–43b, 345/18b–19a, 349/11b–14a, 350/16a–17b, 351/47b–48b; Wu, *Yijiang bilu,* 1/16b–17a.

227 *XFFL*, *j*. 328, 331–32, 334–36, 348–50 passim.

228 Jiaqing degraded Huiling's hat trappings to the second grade. *XFFL*, *j*. 348–51 passim.

229 *XFFL*, *j*. 344, 346–48 passim. Xiong Cui was killed in the eleventh month. *XFFL*, 351/34a–44b.

230 *XFFL*, 347/20b–23b, 349/1a–8b, 349/14a–18a, 350/19b–25b, 351/16b–17b; Gou Chaojiu's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:163.

231 *XFFL*, 349/27a–33b, 350/1a–5a.

232 Jiaqing upgraded Eldemboo's noble rank to marquis of the third grade and granted two hereditary positions to Mukedengbu. *XFFL*, 350/13a–15b, 350/25b–26b, 350/33b–34b.

233 *XFFL*, 350/40a–45b.

234 *XFFL*, 351/13b–15b.

235 *XFFL*, 350/19b–25b, 351/1a–7a, 351/34a–44b.

236 *XFFL*, *j*. 350–51 passim.

237 *XFFL*, 350/15a–b, 350/45b–48a, 351/13b–15b, 351/44b–46b.

238 In the memorial, they listed more than one hundred rebel leaders eliminated throughout the campaign and claimed that hundreds of lesser chiefs had been killed. *XFFL*, 352/1a–6b.

239 Eldemboo was promoted to marquis of the first grade and granted two more hereditary titles and purple reins. Delengtai was also promoted to marquis of the first grade and granted one more hereditary title and purple reins. His son, Suchonga, was promoted to banner vice commander-in-chief and ordered to bring gifts to the front and to visit his father and Eldemboo. Lebao was promoted from baron of the first grade to earl of the first grade and granted one hereditary title—Jiaqing stated that his contributions had not been sufficient to win back his deprived noble rank of duke. Among those who were promoted and awarded were Mingliang, Saicungga, Yang Yuchun, Huiling, Wu Xiongguang, Jiang Sheng, Wesibu, Funing, Ingšan, Wen Chenghui, Yang Kui, and Liu Qing. Among those who received amnesty were Fengshenyinde (Hešen's son), Yimian (who was released from Ili), and Jing'an (who was released from jail and sent to Rehe to serve as a soldier). *XFFL*, 352/6b–19b; *QSLJQ*, 106/8b–19a. On the following day, Jiaqing went to the Shouhuang Hall, north of the Forbidden City, and carried out worship of his forebears. *QSLJQ*, 106/18b.

240 *XFFLXB*, 1/1a–2b.

241 SHD, 07/12/18, 7; *XFFL*, 352/17b–18a; *QSLJQ*, 106/20b–21a.

242 SHD, 07/12/27, 29–30.

243 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 1–6, 7/26b–28a. 9/34b–35b, 11/26b–27a, 11/30b–32a.

244 *XFFLXB*, 2/17b–19b.

245 *XFFLXB*, 7/6b.

246 Liu Xueli, nicknamed "Liu the Bearded" (Liu Zhahuzi), a veteran rebel from Dongxiang, led his group of five to six hundred and routed the Qing troops in

Sichuan's Wushan, killing and injuring nearly two hundred troops and militiamen. When he was mortally wounded in another battle in Zhushan, Liu literally fought to his last breath. *XFFLXB*, 7/32a–37a, 7/37a–38a. When a rebel chief, Hu Yuankui, was arrested, he asked to be killed rather than surrender. Hu was then killed by slicing and slotting. *XFFLXB*, 4/30a–b.

247 *XFFLXB*, 8/1a–4a, 9/39b–40a.

248 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 2 passim.

249 *XFFLXB*, 3/2b–4a, 3/33a, 6/21a–23a, 6/26a–28a, 6/34b–36b, 8/12b, 9/6b–7a.

250 *XFFLXB*, 4/17a–19b, 8/19b–21a, 9/6b–7a, 9/10b–12b, 11/33b–34a.

251 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 2–3 passim, 4/27a, 11/38b. Jiaqing instructed Lebao to send the surrendered rebel chief Wang Guoxian back to the rebels to persuade them to surrender. *XFFLXB*, 3/31a–32a.

252 *XFFLXB*, 9/19a–20a.

253 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 4–5 passim and 9/10b–12b.

254 Seven thousand militiamen had been cut by the ninth month of 1802, and another 3,200 had been cut by the following first month. *XFFLXB*, 5/14b–15a.

255 *XFFLXB*, 1/12b–14b, 5/34a–35a.

256 *XFFLXB*, 3/29a–30b.

257 *XFFLXB*, 5/1a–5b, 5/24b–26a.

258 SHD, 08/02/18, 55–59; 08/02/22, 77–80; 08/02/25, 89–93; 08/06/05, 14; *XFFLXB*, 5/5b–8a, 5/15a–18b, 5/23a–24b, 5/26a–31a, 5/35b–36a.

259 *XFFLXB*, 5/39b–42b.

260 *XFFLXB*, 5/42b–44b, 5/44b–45b.

261 *XFFLXB*, 6/12b–13b, 9/33a.

262 *XFFLXB*, 7/28b–32a.

263 *XFFLXB*, 8/13a–15b, 9/1a–2a, 10/13b–14a.

264 *XFFLXB*, 6/15b–16a, 9/36b, 13/30a–31a.

265 *XFFLXB*, 8/25b–27b.

266 SHD, 08/03/10, 39–46; 08/03/10, 47–50; *XFFLXB*, 8/27b–32b.

267 *XFFLXB*, 8/32b–36a.

268 *XFFLXB*, 9/33a–34a, 10/25b–26a, 10/30b–31b.

269 *XFFLXB*, 10/7a–10a. Jiaqing returned to Eldemboo the title of grand minister in attendance and the purple reins after Qi Guodian was eliminated in the fifth month. *XFFLXB*, 13/1a–8a.

270 Lebao complained of back and leg pain, panting, vertigo, and insomnia. However, he did not really rest, which won him Jiaqing's praise for taking his job seriously. *XFFLXB*, 9/16b–18b, 10/37b–38a, 11/25a.

271 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 13–15.

272 *XFFLXB*, 12/20b–21b, 13/10b–11b, 13/25b–26a, 13/34b–35a, 14/20a–21b.

273 In the sixth month, Eldemboo proposed withdrawing from the campaign all the bannermen and troops from other provinces. *XFFLXB*, 15/7a–b, 15/23b–24b.

274 *XFFLXB*, 14/12a–13b. When Delengtai's men captured eight former militiamen who had looted, they confessed that the 3-tael award was not enough to start a living. *XFFLXB*, 14/25b.

275 *XFFLXB*, 15/23a–26a.

276 *XFFLXB*, 15/18a–19a.

277 *XFFLXB*, 14/13b–15a, 15/19a, 15/31a–b.

278 SHD, 08/06/12, 37–42; 08/06/25, 75–79; *XFFLXB*, 15/7b–10b, 15/16b–18a, 16/12a–14a.

279 *XFFLXB*, 16/1a–3b, 16/34b–38b.

280 *XFFLXB*, 16/33a, 16/38b–43a.

281 *QSLJQ*, 116/34b–40a; *XFFLXB*, 16/43a–48a.

282 *QSLJQ*, 117/1a–4b.

283 *XFFLXB*, 16/10a–11a., 16/16b–17a.
284 Jiaqing instructed that uniform rules be set up with regard to the punishment of coerced civilians and directed that short-term rebels be punished with exile and long-term rebels be sent to viceroys or Eldemboo for interrogation and the cases forwarded to him for decisions. *QSLJQ*, 116/40b–41b; *XFFLXB*, 16/48b–51a.
285 *XFFLXB*, 17/8a, 17/47b–49a.
286 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 18–19. Jiaqing also tried to turn Delengtai, who was on his way to Rehe, back to the campaign. *XFFLXB*, 16/38b–43a. Apparently, the order failed to reach Delengtai in time.
287 When those militiamen, four to five hundred in total, made a commotion while searching for rebel remnants in the Qinling Mountains, Yang Fang ordered Wu Tinggang to demobilize them. However, nobody escorted them to Hanzhong to be sent back to Sichuan. Apparently, those militiamen set themselves free en route. *XFFLXB*, 16/11a–b, 16/32a–b, 23/3b–4b, 23/17b–18a, 27/1b.
288 *XFFLXB*, 20/35a–36a, 21/36b.
289 In a battle in Shaanxi's Dingyuan on a misty morning early in the tenth month, they killed a number of Qing officers and charged Yang Yuchun's unit several times. *XFFLXB*, 21/20a–b. Wu Xiongguang noted that this band was "extraordinarily fierce." *XFFLXB*, 25/12a.
290 *XFFLXB*, 19/22a–29a, 20/36b, 20/38b–40a.
291 *XFFLXB*, 15/24b, 15/32a–b.
292 *XFFLXB*, 21/21b, 21/23b–24a, 21/35a–42b, 22/6a–9b.
293 *XFFLXB*, 22/11a–16a, 22/25a–28a, *j*. 21–23 passim. Wu Xiongguang reported that the militiamen-cum-rebels claimed that Eldemboo had unfairly discharged them but added that he thought that they invented the charges in order to defame Eldemboo and Yang Yuchun. *XFFLXB*, 25/12a.
294 *XFFLXB*, 22/28a–29b, 22/53b–56a.
295 *XFFLXB*, 22/41a, 22/43b–47b.
296 Wei Zhongcai's uncle, Wei Sishu, propelled the killing of the seven militiamen. Back in 1796, Zhongcai had reported his uncle to the authorities for sectarian practice. *XFFLXB*, 33/17b–18b.
297 *XFFLXB*, 23/1a–6b.
298 *XFFLXB*, 22/48b–53a, 23/8a–11a.
299 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 23–25 passim.
300 *QSLJQ*, 126/23a–24a; *XFFLXB*, 24/20a–22a, 24/23b–24b.
301 *XFFLXB*, 24/12a–b, 24/37a–39a, 25/4b–6b, 25/13a–14b, 25/24b–26a.
302 Jiaqing returned the deprived hat trappings to Yang Yuchun and granted gifts and silver plaques to the officers and the wounded. *XFFLXB*, 25/27b–34b.
303 Zhou Shihong's confession, *BLJZL*, 5:161; *XFFLXB*, 24/1a–b, 26/20a, 28/26a, 31/12b–13a.
304 *XFFLXB*, 25/39a–b.
305 By the early ninth month, 1803, Shaanxi had cut 2,500 militiamen. In Sichuan, more than 5,000 militiamen were discharged in the eighth and ninth months. In Hubei, Wu Xiongguang stepped up cutting the remaining 2,000 to 3,000 militiamen in the tenth month. *XFFLXB*, *j*. 17–18, 20 passim. But Wu proposed, early in 1804, not to discharge the last militiamen in Hubei until the end of the campaign so that they would not have a chance to bargain, to which Jiaqing agreed. *XFFLXB*, 24/3a–4a.
306 *XFFLXB*, 24/3a–b.
307 *XFFLXB*, 23/17b–18a.
308 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 25–29 passim.
309 He disapproved of Zhu Xun's using his own "silver to nourish virtue"

allowance to increase the discharge awards to the militias. *XFFLXB*, 22/36a–b, 23/17b–18a.

310 *XFFLXB*, 22/53b–56a.

311 *XFFLXB*, 23/17a–19b.

312 *XFFLXB*, 23/20a–21b.

313 *XFFLXB*, 24/10a–12a.

314 Jiaqing also directed that the discharged militias be escorted home in groups no bigger than one hundred people and with several days between batches. SHD, 09/02/09, 69–71; *XFFLXB*, 24/14a–16a.

315 *XFFLXB*, 29/6b.

316 *XFFLXB*, 26/1a–2b, 26/11a–24a.

317 *XFFLXB*, 26/28a–29b.

318 *XFFLXB*, 26/33a–36b, 27/27b–28b.

319 *XFFLXB*, 27/9a–11b.

320 *XFFLXB*, 27/16b–18b.

321 They were deprived of their honorary positions, hat trappings, and purple reins. In addition, Delengtai was demoted to earl of the second grade and deprived of his position of grand minister consultant. Jiaqing also instructed Eldemboo to severely reprimand Yang Yuchun and his subordinates. *XFFLXB*, 27/18b–23b.

322 He directed them to cut incapable militias and retain only the able-bodied ones since they would be more manageable when fewer remained in service. *XFFLXB*, 28/5a–7b, 28/9a–10a.

323 *XFFLXB*, 23/19b–20a, 27/33a–b.

324 *XFFLXB*, 27/24b–26a.

325 *XFFLXB*, 27/24b–26a, 27/28b–29a. Wu Xiongguang had pointed out, more than once, that the militias no longer had an incentive to fight if they had no chance to loot. *XFFLXB*, 10/13b–14a, 27/27b–28b.

326 Not pleased with Lebao's noncommittal position, Jiaqing told him to use Fang's method of hiring them as runners at the local yamens. *XFFLXB*, 28/31a–32b, 28/34a–35a.

327 *XFFLXB*, 27/30a–35a. 28/7b–9a, 28/14a–15b, 28/27a–29b, 28/29b–30a.

328 He had repeatedly turned down Jiaqing's request to return to the war while in Beijing. *XFFLXB*, 27/19b–20a.

329 *XFFLXB*, 29/6a–7b.

330 Jiaqing sent an imperial guardsman and a doctor to the front to care for Eldemboo and allowed him to return Beijing in a sedan chair, with no need to arrive in time to accompany Jiaqing to Muran. *XFFLXB*, 29/1a–5a, 29/7b–12b.

331 *XFFLXB*, 29/17a–22a, 29/24b–33a, 30/1a–3a, 30/7b–8b.

332 *XFFLXB*, 29/8b–9a. Right after his arrival, Nayancheng accused two local officials in Xing'an of failing to settle discharged militias properly and requested punishment for them. *XFFLXB*, 30/18b–19b, 30/23b–24a.

333 For nonexpeditionary militiamen, Eldemboo gave 7 taels to those from other provinces and 5 taels to those from Shaanxi. For expeditionary militias, he gave 10 taels to those from other provinces and 7 taels to those from Shaanxi. Among those who joined army, nonexpeditionary militiamen received 5 taels, and expeditionary militiamen received 7 taels (2 taels for clothes and shoes at the time of discharge and 5 taels after they arrived at their brigades). *XFFLXB*, 31/1a–4a.

334 *XFFLXB*, 29/22a–23b, 29/36a–b, 30/1a–3a.

335 *XFFLXB*, 30/8b–15b. Hearing of the battle on his way to Xi'an, Eldemboo held up his journey, met with Yang and Fengshen, and helped interrogate captives. *XFFLXB*, 30/15b–17b, 31/5a–6a.

336 *XFFLXB*, 30/3a–6b, 30/24a–26a, 31/11b–15a.
337 For Gou's death, Jiaqing returned to Delengtai, Saicungga, and Tian Chaogui their deprived positions and hat trappings, including Delengtai's position of grand minister consultant and his noble rank. *XFFLXB*, 31/19b–21a, 31/25b–28a.
338 *XFFLXB*, 31/19b–25b, 31/29b–33b, 32/8a–16a.
339 Besides sending many small gifts and hundreds of silver plaques and nuggets to the generals and troops, Jiaqing only let the Ministry of Personnel deliberate on rewards to Delengtai, Saicungga, Yang Yuchun, Fengshen, Ma Yu, Qingcheng, Tian Chaogui, Ximing, Wang Zhaomeng, and Qingpu, and he promoted Wu Tinggang to regional military commander awaiting a vacancy. On the following day, Jiaqing returned Fang Weidian's hat trappings. *XFFLXB*, 32/16a–21b, 33/3b–4a; *QSLJQ*, 134/3b–6b.
340 *XFFLXB*, 32/24a–25b.
341 *XFFLXB*, 32/16a–20a. Afterward, Jiaqing reiterated this instruction regularly. *XFFLXB*, *j*. 32–33.
342 Looting was reported from all three provinces. *XFFLXB*, 18/32b–33a, 18/38b–39b, 19/3b.
343 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 33–35 passim.
344 *XFFLXB*, 34/26b–28a.
345 *XFFLXB*, 34/16b–18a, 35/1a–6b, 35/9a–10a.
346 *XFFLXB*, 35/10a–15b.
347 *XFFLXB*, *j*. 31–33 passim.
348 *XFFLXB*, 31/7a–11b, 32/15b.
349 *XFFLXB*, 33/39b–41a, 33/44a.
350 *XFFLXB*, 34/14a–16a, 35/19b–21a.
351 *XFFLXB*, 35/22a–b, 35/23a–30b. Meanwhile, Jiaqing endorsed a suggestion by Fang Weidian calling on the rebels still at large to surrender and letting them till the land bought by the Ningshan command. *XFFLXB*, 35/30b–35a. Delengtai subsequently sent all the troops in Shaanxi and Sichuan back to their own garrisons, and he himself returned to his post in Chengdu. *XFFLXB*, 36/1a–2a.
352 *XFFLXB*, 36/17a–23b.
353 *XFFLXB*, 36/24b–26a. Earlier, when six rebels were found hanged on trees, Delengtai reported that it was difficult to identify them, as their corpses had decayed. *XFFLXB*, 36/23b–24b. Although Delengtai did not clearly identify the Wang who jumped as Wang Zuojing, the editors of the official chronicle of the campaign declared that it must have been him. *XFFLXB*, 36/26a–27b.

6. REGULARS AND IRREGULARS

Epigraph: Edict of 09/01/25, NGDK, 125650.
1 Wei Yuan, *Shengwuji*, 457–65. Parts of this and the last sections of this chapter are drawn from my 2009 article "Civilians Go into Battle," published in *Asia Major*.
2 Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies*, 41–50. Before Kuhn, Suzuki delineated the phenomenon of the massive militias in the war, including the mercenary type of militias, *suizheng xiangyong*, with an emphasis on their spontaneity and the role of the local elites. *Shinchō chūkishi*, 189–96.
3 Before this time, militias were only sporadically used and mostly in the frontier regions. For example, in 1731, in Gansu's Hezhou, the prefect Gu Erchang organized a nine-thousand-person militia to guard twenty-four passes. But the militia was soon disbanded. *Xunhua tingzhi*, 2/34 and 2/37.

4 Smaller counties hired eight to nine hundred civilians each, and bigger ones hired five to six thousand each and paid them 60 *wen* in coins per day in areas not close to battlegrounds and 80 *wen* in areas near battlegrounds. Fuk'anggan, QL49/07/22, Junjidang, 37669.
5 On the campaign in Taiwan, see Lococo., "Military Campaign"; Zhuang, *Qing Gaozong*, 183–267.
6 Delengtai pointed to the Taiwan campaign, in 1802, as the start of using militias in wars. *XFFL* 329/17b–18b. Jiaqing echoed this view afterward. NGDK, 125650.
7 In a few months, they had used up 800,000 taels and requested an additional 1 million taels from the state. Fuk'anggan, QL60/07/17, Junjidang, 47104.
8 *QSLJQ*, 70/29a–30a.
9 Zhaolian, *Xiaoting zalu*, 351; Cai, *Qingshi liezhuan*, 328.
10 *BLJZL*, 1:56–58.
11 *BLJZL*, 1:60; *XFFL*, 1/11a.
12 At Xiaogan's Sanchabu, a hub of the salt trade, local gentry members and merchants recruited thousands of people as militias, who repelled the rebels repeatedly. Zu Zhiwang rewarded them with hat trappings, and a local official donated rice for their food rations. *XFFL*, 13/14b–15a. In Herong, an affluent town between Dangyang and Jingzhou, several degree holders donated their own property to hire militiamen and set up three checkpoints after Dangyang fell to the rebels. *XFFL*, 2/12b–14a. In Hubei's Yunxian, local residents including some degree holders and military students organized militias in 1797. *XFFL*, 7/17b–18a, 8/26b–27a.
13 Huiling indicated this in a memorial in the third month of 1796. *XFFL*, 5/14b–15a. Jingzhou's prefect scrambled for hundreds of militiamen for local defense. *XFFL*, 2/12b–14a. In Xianfeng, the magistrate and gentry members recruited a couple of thousand people, setting up checkpoints and killing more than a hundred rebels. *XFFL*, 3/17a–b. Yunyang's prefect recruited 2,600-plus militiamen by promising them rewards; they joined the fighting in Yunyang. *XFFL*, 6/3b–4a. In Fangxian and Baokang, over 5,000 militiamen were recruited and joined the fighting. *XFFL*, 6/5a–6a. Mingliang stated: "When the Hubei sectarian bandits made trouble, which spread to many places, all the prefectures and counties assembled militias before the arrival of the imperial forces to defend [their jurisdictions]. Affluent gentry members and influential families were also involved in guarding their villages, killing bandits bravely and assisting the imperial troops to augment their prowess." *XFFL*, 13/31a–32a.
14 Jiaobudang, JQ02/08, 135–38; *BLJZL*, 1:72–75; *XFFL*, 5/14b–15a, 10/26a. In Dangyang, Bi Yuan recruited three to four thousand militiamen to join the siege of Dangyang, and eight hundred to one thousand militiamen were recruited in each village in the area. *XFFL*, 4/9b–10a. Wang Xin reported that over ten thousand militiamen were recruited in Jiahezhou and Huanglongdang near the city of Xiangyang. *XFFL*, 34/48a. In the eighth month of 1796, the officials in Yichang prefecture called for recruiting more militiamen to reinforce defenses at all the passes and intersections when the insurgents holed up in Langping. *XFFL*, 13/50a–b.
15 *XFFL*, 10/16a–b, 18/11a–12a.
16 *XFFL*, 11/8a–9a.
17 *XFFL* 3/6b–9a, 3/13a–b, 17/22a–b.
18 *MQDA*, A306–75.
19 *XFFL*, 33/43a–b.
20 When Du Maocai, a Dazhou native and lower-ranking expectant official in

Anhui, returned home to visit his family after having escorted funds to Sichuan, he stayed and organized a militia of one thousand people. Du was promoted to magistrate in the late spring of 1801. *XFFL*, 20/24b, 311/17a–b, 311/19a–b. In Fengjie, Liu Qian and his two brothers organized the residents to fight against the rebels at Laomuyuan. *Fengjie xianzhi*, 28/36b–37b. In Daning, Rao Mingchu donated money and organized a militia; it joined the battle at Laomuyuan. *Daning xianzhi*, 7/1b–2a. Also see *KJJFSB*, 1/4a–5b.

21 *XFFL*, 19/16a–17a.

22 *XFFL*, 22/36b, 22/42a, 28/13b–14a; GZDJQ, 1454.

23 They also selected outstanding militiamen from nearby to serve as guards to free the troops for fighting. *XFFL*, 13/21a–b.

24 *XFFL*, 18/33a–34a.

25 In Shaanxi, Lu Youren used them to escort transports of funds and supplies. *XFFL*, 330/20a–b.

26 Early in 1796, Bi Yuan let the militiamen in Hubei either wear a charm or attach a piece of red or white cloth inside their clothes as an insignia. *XFFL*, 4/9b–10a, 22/16b; *BLJZL*, 1:74. Qin Cheng'en prepared uniforms and hats for the militias he recruited in southern Shaanxi in early 1796 and had "good citizens" (*liangmin*) written on the uniform. *XFFL*, 11/8a–9a. In early 1797, Huiling had militiamen in Xiangyang attach a piece of yellow cloth inside of their jackets bearing their names, ages, and the seal marks of their superiors. *XFFL*, 24/45b–46a. In 1799, Songyun provided uniforms and hats to the militias in Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 121/12b–13a.

27 According to Delengtai, some of his militiamen were brought from the Miao campaign, and most of the rest were hired in 1797 and 1798. *XFFLXB*, 22/44a–b.

28 They were given large food rations and awarded with money. *XFFL*, 18/33a–35a.

29 *XFFL*, 28/4a, 38/28b.

30 *XFFL*, 39/25b–26a, 39/32b–33a.

31 *XFFL*, 107/24b–25a, 107/29b–30b.

32 *XFFL*, 25/14b–15a.

33 In 1797, eight hundred volunteer militiamen led by several degree holders in Shangzhou, Shaanxi, asked to join the regular army to fight the rebels. Six hundred of them were accepted. *XFFL*, 36/14b–15a.

34 In southern Shaanxi, Qin Cheng'en issued stipends to militiamen and used the grain from communal granaries for their food rations. *XFFL*, 11/8a–9a.

35 *XFFL*, 1/24a–b. He reiterated this in an edict on 01/03/11. *XFFL*, 4/8b.

36 *XFFL*, 8/4b.

37 *XFFL*, 5/5b, 5/15a.

38 *XFFL*, 5/14b–15a.

39 The Shifengpu precedents, 60 *wen* of cash per day in areas away from the frontline and 80 *wen* per day in areas involved in the fighting, seem to have been followed for years in Shaanxi. NGDK, 108467.

40 *XFFL*, 51/14a. In the autumn of 1797, Yimian began to issue food rations to the militias in Sichuan in addition to their monthly stipends. *XFFL*, 47/6a–b, 126/16b–18a.

41 *XFFL*, 143/19b–22b.

42 *XFFL*, 121/12b–13a.

43 *XFFL*, 61/22a–23b.

44 After having mentioned this in his edict on 01/02/21, Qianlong told Bi Yuan in another edict on 01/03/03 to select the militiamen who fought hard and reward them. *XFFL*, 3/13b.

45 *XFFL*, 5/14b–15a, 6/10b.
46 GZDJQ, 2014.
47 *XFFL*, 47/14b–15a.
48 *XFFL*, 127/1a–b.
49 *XFFL*, 132/23a–25b.
50 Only in Henan were the militia casualties not heavy. *XFFL*, 46/2b–4a.
51 In the late spring of 1796, Qianlong instructed that monetary benefits be granted for killed and injured militiamen. *XFFL*, 10/26a–b. In early 1797, Qianlong approved Yongbao's request to grant the title of company leader to meritorious militiamen killed in battle. *XFFL*, 23/19b–20a; 23/22a–b. About the same time, Qianlong ordered that outstanding militiamen who had been killed receive the same death benefits as Green Standard Army officers of the lowest rank. *QSLJQ*, 13/3a–4a.
52 Among those cases is Qin Cheng'en's petition in early 1798 to grant death benefits to the families of several killed militiamen. *XFFL*, 59/18b–19a.
53 *XFFL*, 90/27b–28a.
54 Songyun also requested to be permitted to reward civil officials who fought the rebels. *XFFL*, 112/17b–24a.
55 Pan's suggestion is quoted in an edict issued on 01/09/08. *XFFL*, 17/12a–b.
56 *XFFL*, 19/3a–4b.
57 *XFFL*, 21/23b, 13/43b, 39/16a.
58 *XFFL*, 11/8a–9a, 20/11b–12a; GZDJQ, 2077.
59 *XFFL*, 126/16b–18a.
60 *XFFL*, 164/35.
61 *XFFL*, 22/31b, 34/37b, 35/5a–b.
62 *XFFL*, 22/26a, 24/45b–46a, 30/3a.
63 Initially, they were not paid regularly. Qin Cheng'en sent them a total of 20,000 taels of silver in addition to cannons and munitions, because most of them were poor, and it was difficult for them to provide their own food. *XFFL*, 47/6b–7a.
64 *XFFL*, 52/16a, 59/19a–b.
65 *JQSYD*, 11:966; *QSLJQ*, 172/17b–19a.
66 *XFFL*, 49/7a, 50/18b–21b, 62/9b–12a, 63/1a–2b, 64/2a–b, 65/35a–36a, 70/16a–b.
67 SHD, edict of 08/05/??, 99; *QSLJQ*, 22/3b, 113/26b; *XFFL*, 49/15b, 72/18b.
68 *XFFL*, 77/12b.
69 *XFFL*, 24/26b–27a, 27/9b.
70 A total of 4,500 militiamen were hired in the fifth month. Of them, 3,000 were selected to join the fight after receiving training. GZDJQ, 2472; *XFFL*, 33/38b–39a, 37/24a–b, 39/9a–b.
71 Luo Siju led a group of militiamen and troops disguised as rebels and killed four hundred sectarians who planned an uprising in the Yunyang-Wanxian area in the summer of 1797. *XFFL*, 43/20a–24a, 43/26a–b. Gui Han broke into a rebel fort ahead of others in a battle in Yilong in the spring of 1798. *XFFL*, 70/36a. Also see Wei Yuan, *Shengwuji*, 457–64.
72 Before the arrival of the Xiangyang force, four to five thousand militiamen were recruited in Taiping. *XFFL*, 37/24a–b. In the autumn of 1797, Shi Zuorui, Liu Qing, and other logistical officials hired more than ten thousand militiamen and led them to join the fighting. *XFFL*, 48/6b, 49/1b. Yimian used many militiamen, both hired and voluntary, in attacking the rebel stronghold at Fangshanping. *BLJZL*, 1:280–83.
73 GZDJQ, 6208, 10082; *XFFL*, 79/9b–10a. But Delengtai claimed, in 1802, that there were 370,000 militias in Sichuan in 1796–1797. *XFFL* 329/18b–19a.

74 *XFFL*, 79/9b–11a, 93/5a–b, 126/16b–17b; GZDJQ, 10082.
75 According to Wu Xiongguang, when he was Henan's governor, he recruited only those with decent backgrounds. *XFFLXB*, 3/29a. Also see edict of 08/01/09, SHD, 58.
76 *XFFL*, 333/12b–13a; *XFFLXB*, 3/29a–30b. In the early summer of 1797, the militiamen in Dazhou returned home to harvest their fields. *XFFL*, 39/13b.
77 Delengtai reported in early 1803 that most of the paid militiamen in Hubei's Badong, and Sichuan's Wushan and Daning had families and livelihoods. SHD, 08/02/25, 91. According to Lebao, only 447 of over 9,000 killed militiamen in one place in Sichuan during 1797–1799 had families. NGDK, 114654.
78 *QSLJQ*, 116/41b. In 1803, Huiling and Zu Zhiwang stated that the guardsmen militias in Shaanxi were mostly natives, but most of the expeditionary militias came from Sichuan and Hubei. *XFFLXB*, 14/3a–b.
79 *XFFLXB*, 3/29a–30b.
80 This occurred in Dongxiang, Xinning, and Kaixian in the spring and summer of 1797. *XFFL*, 43/7a.
81 In 1698, Wang Jiwen, the governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou, deployed soldiers of native chieftains in suppressing local bandits in a non-Han area. *Da Qing lichao shilu*, Kangxi period, 88/12a–b.
82 In 1718, Lu Zhenyang, the regional military commander of Songpan, mobilized local chieftains' troops for deployment and used them to help guard passes and serve as laborers. Lu requested permission to provide them with food rations, which was endorsed by the central government. *Da Qing lichao shilu*, Kangxi period, 277/2b–3b. In 1720, Yue Zhongqi, a brigade commander in Songpan, enlisted Tibetan and other ethnic soldiers from Songpan, and formed a six-hundred-man squad to march to Lhasa with him. Yue Zhongqi's biography, Zhuan'gao, 6409 (1–3).
83 *Da Qing lichao shilu*, Kangxi period, 299/5b–6a.
84 The yearly stipend for a regular Green Standard soldier was 6 taels of silver but only 3 taels for a Jinchuan native soldier. *QSLQL*, 1459/43b–44b. The death benefits to the families of dead Green Standard soldiers were 50 taels but only 25 taels for Jinchuan native soldiers. *QSLQL*, 1425/19a–b.
85 Ethnic soldiers were entitled to 3 taels of "outfit allowance," whereas Manchu bannermen were entitled 20 taels and Green Standard soldiers 6 taels at the lowest level. The bannermen and Green Standard personnel could also borrow money from the state, whereas the ethnic soldiers did not have this privilege. *JXZL*, Hubu, *j*. 1 and 3.
86 The military colonies in Jinchuan turned out to be extremely costly; the state had to allocate huge amounts of fund to support both the Green Standard troops and the native soldiers. The deployment of native soldiers likely helped justify retaining the military colonies.
87 Kuoerka dang, QL56/10/27, 152–53; QL56/11/26, 168–69; QL57/04/03, 3–13.
88 During the Taiwan campaign, Qianlong sent lamb and other gifts for the Jinchuan soldiers. In 1794, Qianlong praised their contributions in the second Gurkha war and ordered that 1,500 native soldiers in Jinchuan be awarded 3 taels per year and there be no tax on their newly reclaimed land in Jinchuan. *QLSYD*, 18:168–69.
89 McMahon, "Identity and Conflict."
90 In the early summer of 1797, Qianlong granted one-month stipend to all troops, including the ethnic soldiers, fighting against the Changyang rebels. He also posthumously promoted a killed native officer to the position of native assistant regional commander, which was to be inherited by his offspring, and

granted his family 200 taels of silver. *XFFL*, 41/36b–37b.

91 *XFFL*, 37/36b–37a, 37/39a.

92 GZDJQ, 2291.

93 *XFFL*, 130/32b–33a, 140/3a–b. Only 202 Jinchuan troops, 90 of them sick, returned home. It is likely that many had died either in battle or of disease. *XFFL*, 201/14b–22a.

94 Of them, 106 were from the military colonies in Jinchuan and 101 from other places in Jinchuan. *XFFL*, 141/30b.

95 The soldiers were deployed from places such as Bathang, Lithang, Mingzheng, Muping, Chuosijia, and Suomo. *XFFL*, 152/ 14a.

96 Wu Xiongguang said so in the spring of 1800. *XFFL*, 165/17a–18a.

97 *Xunhua tingzhi*, 5/33.

98 GZDJQ, 2290; *XFFL*, 35/28b, 37/37b, 38/15b, 38/29b, 38/33b, 39/14a–15a, 39/18a–20b.

99 The throne granted high compensation to the families of the deceased Salar officers and troops. *XFFL*, 38/15b, 49/10b, 49/18b, 55/26b–27b; *QSLJQ*, 49/10b, 61/21a–22a, 61/24b–25a.

100 *XFFL*, 102/5a, 103/27b–29a.

101 *XFFL*, 102/3a–5a, 102/8a–b, 103/27b–29a, 107/6b–8b.

102 *XFFL*, 111/16a–17b, 111/19a.

103 *XFFL*, 123/19a–b, 123/20b.

104 *XFFL*, 129/14b–15b.

105 *XFFL*, 129/23a–25b.

106 *XFFL*, 132/3a–b, 132/9b–10b, 136/6b.

107 *XFFL*, 154/1a–ab, 154/2b–3b.

108 In the spring of 1797, Qianlong turned down the request by a chieftain of Zhuanglang, Gansu, to send three hundred of his soldiers to the campaign because it would disturb the chieftain's neighborhood. *XFFL*, 34/52a, 34/53a.

109 An example is Yue Zhongqi's use of his rapport with the chieftain of Jinchuan to end the first Jinchuan war in 1749. Dai, *Sichuan Frontier*, 128–29.

110 The essay, "Jianbi qingye yi" (On "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside") appears in Gong, *Danjingzhai wenchao*, *waipian*, 1/3a–12b.

111 *QSG*, 13042. Kuhn has even labeled Gong a "strategist" in the White Lotus War. *Rebellion and Its Enemies*, 45–47.

112 Gao, "*Shou Yun jilüe*"; *Yunxian zhi*, 10/85b–86a; Hibino, "Gōson bōei"; Rowe, *Crimson Rain*, 128–33.

113 Some forts remain visible today in eastern Sichuan, southern Shaanxi, and northwestern Hubei.

114 *XFFL*, 32/1a–2a.

115 *XFFL*, 47/25b–26a; *Xiangyang xianzhi*, 1/28b, 4/61b–62a.

116 *XFFL*, 52/20a–23a, 52 /29a–30b; *QSLJQ*, 23/3a–6a.

117 At the end of 1797, tens of thousands of residents in Sichuan's Guang'an fortified themselves on a mountaintop, and militias were hired by the local officials to thwart the rebels' attacks with rolling logs and rocks. *XFFL*, 58/18b–19a. In the summer of 1798, Jing'an and G'aoki coordinated the building of city walls and digging of moats in Hubei. *XFFL*, 74/37a–39b. In Shaanxi's Liuba, forts had been built on hills by the spring of 1799. *XFFL*, 100/6b.

118 *JQSYD*, 4:23.

119 *XFFL*, 100/1a–4a.

120 *XFFL*, 104/11b–12b. According to Suizhou's gazetteers, the only fort built in Suizhou was at Guanzhuangdian by its resident Wang Mingde. However, when three thousand Xiangyang rebels passed the fort from Yingshan early in 1797, Wang and more than one hundred militiamen were killed by the rebels, and

the fort seems to have been destroyed. *Suizhou zhi*, 25/4b–5a. Jiaqing may have mistaken Suizhou for some other place.

121 *XFFL*, 104/12b–13b.

122 Nayancheng suggested setting rules, charging local officials to oversee the process, and granting subsidies to poor households for moving into the forts. *XFFL*, 125/9b–10b.

123 *XFFL*, 25/29b–30a.

124 *XFFL*, 128/21a–23b, 128/28b.

125 *XFFL*, 133/47b–48a.

126 *XFFL*, 154/20b–22a.

127 Taibu intended to also use the forts as storehouses for war matériel to curtail transportation costs. *XFFL*, 161/12b–14a, 162/11b–14a, 168/27b–30b, 168/32b–33a.

128 *QSLJQ*, 70/8b–12a; *XFFL*, 186/1a–5b.

129 *XFFL*, 107/27b–28b.

130 *XFFL* 144/36a–38b, 147/43b–44a, 162/11b–14a, 168/27b–30b, 175/22a–23b.

131 Lu Youren moved the residents in the smaller forts to the bigger ones and helped those who stayed to organize militias, as he observed that bigger forts on high peaks that housed thousands of households were secure, but small forts on low hills or in other unsafe places were prone to rebel attacks. *XFFL*, 216/4a–7b. Also see Lu's biography in *QSG*, 11339–41.

132 *XFFL*, 123/18b–19a.

133 *XFFL*, 123/16b–17a, 125/9b–10b, 133/13b, 144/36a–38b. Jiaqing praised the officials who had made donations and promised awards and promotions to them and the affluent who donated money. *XFFL*, 144/39b–40b, 154/16b–20b, 162/11b–14a, 168/27b–30b, 175/22a–23b, 229/6b–14a, 230/19b–20a.

134 *XFFL*, 304/3b–7b.

135 *XFFL*, 235/6b–9b, 235/15a–16b.

136 *XFFL*, 180/23a–b, 202/14b–18b, 215/24a–26a, 217/19b–20a, 218/45b–47b. In Dangyang, more than forty forts were built (many were still usable in the mid-nineteenth century). *Dangyang xianzhi*, 6/3a–4b, 16/3a–4b. In Fangxian, the forts were built mainly in 1800 and 1801. *Fangxian zhi*, 3/12a–16a.

137 *XFFL*, 226/22b–23b, 231/6b–15a, 238/25a–28b.

138 *XFFL*, 259/26b.

139 *XFFL*, 333/13b–14a. Wu explained years later that he did not believe that this measure was useful. *Yijiang bilu*, 1/16b.

140 Kuilun stated that "there are extremely numerous forts all over Sichuan." *XFFL*, 144/28a. Mingliang and Delengtai suggested, in their memorial on fortification in late 1797, that the people in Sichuan could make use of those old forts. *XFFL*, 52/20a–23a. In Daning, a gentry member, Shen Ying, spearheaded fortification, building "Baoningzhai" west of the seat of Daning. *Daning xianzhi*, 7/3a. At Daxian's Panshixiang, two hundred households built on a mountaintop a walled settlement called "Tianbaozhai." *Daxian Panshixiang zhi*, 1/36a–b.

141 In pursuing Zhang Hanchao to northern Sichuan in late 1798, Mingliang and Xingzhao found that most residents had moved into "mountain forts" so that Zhang had difficulties getting enough food. *XFFL*, 80/20b–21a. In late 1799, Minghing reported a similar situation in northeastern Sichuan. *XFFL*, 128/21a–23b.

142 *XFFL*, 139/20a, 139/22a–b, 143/19b–20a, 144/28a–29b, 152/16a–19b.

143 *XFFL*, 134/4b-5a, 215/7b-12a, 224/5b-6a, 226/17b-21b.

144 *XFFL*, 186/3a-b, 224/22b-25a, 238/28b-30b.

145 *XFFL*, 261/17a-25b.
146 Jiaqing agreed that fort building should only be implemented in areas where conditions permitted, but he did not want to impose it everywhere. *XFFL*, 108/10b–14b.
147 When 1801 started, Jiaqing told Eldemboo that he was eager for victory and could not wait another one or two months for Shaanxi to complete fortification. He also thought that there was no time for Hubei to build forts. *XFFL*, 223/36a–b, 226/4b–6b.
148 *XFFL*, 223/24a–30a, 230/16a–22b.
149 In the summer of 1801, Eldemboo again recommended fortification as one of the best ways to wipe out the rebels. He praised Lu Youren and recommended officers and officials for rewards for their fort-building effort in Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 262/5b–11b.
150 SHD, 08/03/10, 39–46; 08/03/10, 47–50; *XFFLXB*, 8/28b–29a.
151 Wu, *Yijiang bilu*, 1/16b.
152 Mingliang noted this in 1800. *XFFL*, 196/26a–27b. Lebao admitted as much in early 1802, saying that there had been only a "1 to 2 percent chance" for civilians in the forts to fight the rebels in the past several years. GZDJQ, 7059.
153 In the spring of 1802, Lu Youren reported that there had been scores of such cases. Jiaqing instructed that the number of rebels caught be used as the criterion for awarding local officials. *XFFL*, 304/22a–23a, 304/33b–34b. In 1803 and 1804, there were numerous such incidents. *XFFLXB*, *j*. 12–16.
154 In late 1799, insurgents attacked Qing logistical convoys four times in Taiping, Dongxiang, and Kaixian, seizing rice and killing porters. *XFFL*, 133/38b–39a. Delengtai reported, early in 1802, that rebels in western Hubei took over civilians' houses as well as their caves or forts in the mountains and seized their supplies. *XFFL*, 303/5a–b. In the summer of 1802, Pu Tianbao's band seized several forts in Hubei's Xingshan. *XFFL*, 325/10b–11a. Late in 1802, Wu Xiongguang warned that the rebels could take civilians' forts to use for themselves, as Tan Jiayao had done in Changyang in 1796–1797 and Luo Qiqing in Yingshan in 1798. *XFFL*, 333/13b.
155 Wu, *Yijiang bilu*, 1/16b. In the summer of 1802, Eldemboo reported that some fort residents in Shaanxi sold foodstuffs to the rebels at high prices and sheltered injured rebels for money. Eldemboo punished several people, including one execution. *XFFL*, 323/4b–5b.
156 A rebel caught in Dongxiang in early 1800 confessed that they did not dare to attack the big forts but threatened the smaller ones. *XFFL*, 140/1b–2a, 141/6b–7a. In mid-1803, scores of rebels kidnaped twenty-four men and women in Fangxian and released them after their forts paid ransom. *XFFLXB*, 12/10a–11b.
157 *XFFL*, 140/7b–8a.
158 *XFFL*, 144/9a–b.
159 A captured rebel reported that they had moved to Hubei from Sichuan and Shaanxi because of the poor harvest in the two provinces. *XFFL*, 234/19b–20b.
160 *XFFL*, 215/16b–24a.
161 *XFFL*, 165/17a–19b.
162 There was only one exception: in the autumn of 1798, when Leng Tianlu holed up at Zushiguan in Yunyang, Lebao sent Qing soldiers to harvest the fields and ordered them to burn the fields when Leng's men rushed out of their forts to grab the crops. *XFFL*, 79/7a–b.
163 *XFFL*, 226/17b–21b.
164 In Shaanxi, some fort residents did not bring all their foodstuffs to the forts but stored them in the empty houses left behind, which were often seized by the

insurgents. Lu Youren punished those people by confiscating their grain. *XFFL*, 340/19b–20a.

165 *QSG*, 13040–42; *XFFL*, 63/9a–b. When Yimian returned to Shaanxi in early 1798, Gong apparently followed him. Yimian reported at the beginning of 1799 that Gong led the militias and joined a battle in southern Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 86/10b–11a.

166 On 01/05/12, Yimian requested that Gong be promoted to the position of prefect and allowed to change his hat trappings before he was given such a position. GZDJQ, 608. On 01/08/18, Yimian recommended Gong to be the prefect of Qingyang prefecture. GZDJQ, 1032. Early in 1797, Yimian put Gong's name on a list of meritorious people in clearing up the rebels in southern Shaanxi. As a result, Gong was conferred colored hat trappings. *XFFL*, 25/21a.

167 *XFFL*, 89/10a.

168 *XFFL*, 110/26a–27a.

169 *XFFL*, 144/32a–b.

170 *XFFL*, 189/6a–11b.

171 *XFFL*, 228/19b–20a. In the summer of 1804, he mentioned again in a memorial that he had started the project in the winter of 1797. *XFFLXB*, 28/33a–b.

172 *JQQJZ*, 10:219.

173 After the meeting with Lebao, Jiaqing apparently asked the editorial board of the official chronicle of the White Lotus War for proof to support this view. He was subsequently presented a memorial by Lebao from the third month of 1799 in which Lebao mentioned the fortification project in Sichuan. *JQQJZ*, 10:219.

174 Lebao, *Pingding jiaofei*, 17b–18a, 22a. However, in a brief biography of Lebao, Shi Yunyu, Chongqing prefect during the White Lotus War and a protégé of Lebao, did not mention at all Lebao's effort in fortification in Sichuan. *Duxuelu wugao*, 22a–29b.

175 Most of them were deployed in the first three years. As Qianlong declared, by the summer of 1798, a total of more than eighty thousand troops had been deployed. *XFFL*, 75/33a–b.

176 Edict of 03/08/08, *BLJZL*, 2:263.

177 *XFFL*, 271/10b–12b.

178 *XFFL*, 331/18a–19a, 331/23b–24a.

179 Early in 1803, Eldemboo sent back the 150 Shengjing bannermen. *XFFLXB*, 5/13a–15a. In the third month of 1803, Lebao sent back 73 invalid bannermen and retained 84 healthy ones in Sichuan. *XFFLXB*, 10/13a–b; for the withdrawal of the last bannermen, 13/17b–18a, 15/23a–24a, 15/29b–30a.

180 *XFFL*, 132/27b, 133/5b–7b.

181 In the autumn of 1800, the news that Wang Wenxiong was killed in Shaanxi reminded Jiaqing of both Huilun's and Anlu's deaths. He said plaintively that it was not worthy for Wang, an official of the first rank, to die fighting the rebels. *XFFL*, 169/21b–22a.

182 *XFFLXB*, 8/5b–8a. The other ranking bannerman killed was Fengshen'a, a banner vice commander-in-chief who died in Hubei shortly before Huilun's death. Two other ranking bannermen, Yongde and Shuliang, died of illness in late 1798 in Sichuan.

183 *JXZL*, Hubu, 4/1a–7a.

184 In the autumn of 1799, Hubei procured both horses and mules (which substituted for camels) from Henan, Shaanxi, and Shandong for three thousand Manchurian bannermen. *XFFL*, 118/25b–30a, 118/34a–b, 119/7a–8b, 120/24b–27a, 122/20b–21a. At the end of 1799, Sichuan deployed five

hundred horses from Green Standard commands to meet Eldemboo's request to send five hundred horses each from Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guizhou to his forces in Shaanxi. Jiaqing agreed to it and ordered Yunnan and Guizhou to either deploy horses from their garrisons or purchase them from the market. *XFFL*, 132/20b–22b, 132/32a–b, 132/39a. Shortly afterward, Sichuan deployed another five hundred horses from the Green Standard commands in Songpan, Jianchang, and Chengdu for three thousand newly deployed Manchurian bannermen. *XFFL*, 141/30a–b.

185 *XFFL*, 164/30a–32a, 164/35a.

186 *XFFL*, 118/29b–30a.

187 *XFFL*, 260/36b–38a. On 06/06/10, Jiaqing ordered Yan Jian, Henan's governor, to send 350 horses and 150 mules to Hubei. *XFFL*, 260/39b. In the late spring of 1802, Wu Xiongguang bought 100 mules from Henan and 200 locally raised horses from Xiangyang and Yunyang prefectures to replace the Hubei forces' exhausted horses. *XFFL*, 313/25b–26a.

188 Suzuki maintains that bannermen from Manchuria were most instrumental in defeating the rebels, but his evidence is mainly about the Solon soldiers. Suzuki recognizes that the bannermen from the two brigades in Beijing were poorly disciplined and not useful. *Shinchō chūkishi*, 172–73, 179.

189 In fact, the bannermen had another reputation for disturbing and extorting local officials and people when traveling. When Guwanghing was sent to Sichuan, Jiaqing had two dozen palace bannermen escort the war funds to Sichuan first and held Guwanghing back for some days before setting out so that Guwanghing could learn how the bannermen behaved en route. *QSLJQ*, 40/3b.

190 On 04/03/12, Jiaqing ordered their return and deprived Neyin, their leader, of his vice commandership. *XFFL*, 90/17b, 92/29b–30a, 106/7a–b, 111/45b, 124/9b–10b.

191 At the end of 1799, Minghing requested another four hundred bannermen from the Chengdu garrison so that he could fight. *XFFL*, 128/33b–34b.

192 *XFFL* 144/5b–6a. Late in 1799, 825 invalid bannermen were repatriated, and there were still 1,356 invalid bannermen in Dazhou.

193 *XFFL* 133/40a–b.

194 When 950 Guangdong troops were sent to Sichuan to replace the previously deployed Guangdong troops, only 385 arrived in Sichuan in early 1800. Eldemboo requested permission to dismiss their commander, Qige, who had claimed that he was injured in a battle but only had slight swelling of his back and knee; Jiaqing endorsed the request. *XFFL*, 142/5a–6a, 142/9a–b. Jiaqing pointed out in early 1799 that he was fully aware of the problem of inflated rosters in the armies. *QSLJQ*, 37/22b–23a; *XFFL*, 87/15a–b.

195 Late in 1802, Eldemboo asked for pardons for several officers who had troops under them that failed to return on time. Jiaqing directed Eldemboo to check them case by case, punishing the officers whose soldiers indeed deserted but pardoning those who were excusable. *XFFL*, 347/9b–13b.

196 *XFFL*, 144/5b–6a, 192/9a–12b.

197 *XFFL*, 8/8b. During the siege of Dangyang, some militiamen sold saltpeter, sulfur, salt, and other supplies to rebels inside the city and delivered messages for them. Although they did so for money, it is not entirely impossible that some were sympathizers. Peng, *Dangyang bi'nanji*, n.p.

198 Qin Cheng'en forbade them to kill any rebel captive and obliged them to send all captives to the authorities. *XFFL*, 11/8a–9a.

199 *XFFL*, 13/31a–32a.

200 *XFFL*, 13/32a–b. Yet Mingliang singled out the militiamen at Sanchabu as

ineligible for receiving more compensation, since they had already received food rations that had been donated by a local official. *XFFL*, 13/41a.

201 *QSLJQ*, 7/5b–6a; *XFFL*, 13/38b.

202 Mingliang used this trick on several occasions. It was also used by other Manchu generals. Hengšui had Salar soldiers disguise themselves as militiamen when he tried to stop the rebels from crossing the Han River in Hanzhong early in 1798. *XFFL*, 54/24b–25a, 57/22a–23b, 59/34b–35b.

203 *XFFL*, 54/29b–30a.

204 *XFFL*, 20/25a–b, 21/30b, 55/5a. A witness recounted vividly the militias' unbridled pillaging and atrocities in Dangyang, claiming that, when it came to pillaging, "the sectarian bandits are like [ordinary] combs, but the militias are like fine-toothed combs." Peng, *Dangyang bi'nanji*, n.p.

205 *XFFL*, 104/27b–28a.

206 The edict was quoted in Yimian's memorial, GZDJQ, 2381; *XFFL*, 33/34b–35b.

207 The editors of the campaign's chronicle praised Qianlong's decision as farsighted. *XFFL*, 33/35b–36b.

208 Jing'an's memorial was dated 02/04/16. *XFFL*, 34/40b–42a.

209 *XFFL*, 34/45b–46b.

210 Jiaobudang, 02/08, 135–38.

211 *XFFL* 53/30b–32a, 53/33a.

212 *XFFL*, 47/8b–10a.

213 *XFFL*, 47/22b–23a.

214 *XFFL*, 47/22b–25b.

215 *XFFL*, 47/27a–b.

216 GZDJQ, 3022.

217 GZDJQ, 3022.

218 Qianlong ordered Yimian to lead the recruitment in Sichuan; Lebao (who was then the newly appointed governor-general of Huguang) and Wang Xin, in Hubei; Qin Cheng'en and Ke Fan, in Shaanxi; Jing'an, in Henan; and Ingšan, in Gansu. *XFFL*, 51/18a–20a; *QSLJQ*, 22/15a–16a.

219 In the autumn of 1799, Wu Xiongguang reported that not only did the militiamen not want to join the army, but the sons of Green Standard soldiers were also reluctant to fill the army's vacancies. Jiaqing thought the reason was that the officers and generals had not paid enough attention to their well-being. *XFFL*, 116/13b–14b.

220 *XFFL*, 169/13b–14a. The new soldiers were given only partial stipends before they formally filled the vacancies of regular soldiers.

221 *XFFL*, 93/9a–10a.

222 Yimian mentioned in the seventh month of 1798 that some were ready to be deployed. *XFFL*, 45/19b. By the spring of 1800, Chongqing prefecture had recruited 4,500 new soldiers among whom 1,648 had been deployed, 2,180 had been sent to garrisons and strategic points, and only 672 were left in Chongqing, according to Qishiwu. *XFFL*, 164/6a–7a. In the autumn of 1799, when complaining about the shortage of funds, Lebao mentioned that the newly recruited soldiers in Sichuan cost more than 300,000 taels per year. *XFFL*, 110/27b–28a.

223 *XFFLXB*, 18/11a–12b. In Hubei's Fangxian, 300 new soldiers were recruited in 1797; 90 were stationed in the Fangxian county seat and 210 in Junzhou. *Fangxian zhi*, 6/3a.

224 *QSLJQ*, 37/23a; *XFFL*, 87/15b.

225 *JQSYD*, 4:151.

226 *QSLJQ*, 39/29a.

227 SHD, 08/09/08, 91–95; *XFFL*, 114/21a–23a, 117/17a–b, 146/31b–32b,

150/27b–30b.

228 *Da Qing lichao shilu*, Shunzhi period, 127/23b–29a.

229 *QSLJQ*, 50/37a–39b.

230 *XFFL*, 121/10a–13a, 188/22a–25b.

231 *XFFL*, 139/1a–6a.

232 Guan Wenfa thinks that Jiaqing's court officials lacked originality and creativity, which led to the banality of the Jiaqing reign. Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, 228.

233 Jiaqing admitted in 1804 that this scheme had been in abeyance for years. *XFFLXB* 27/30a–31b.

234 Funing cut them from 3,000 to 1,800, and Guwanghing made further cuts. *XFFL*, 152/7b–9a, 160/7b–9a.

235 *XFFL*, 147/49b–51a. Shortly before, Jiaqing had begun to talk more about their advantages, such as absorbing jobless drifters, leaving society with fewer potential rebels. More important, he hoped that the militias would help bring the campaign to its end sooner, making it worth the high cost of hiring them, for it would save on deploying more regulars in the event of a longer war. *XFFL*, 142/20b, 143/11a–12b, 143/11a–12a.

236 GZDJQ, 4941; *XFFL*, 149/6b–7a.

237 *XFFL*, 149/13a–17a, 158/18b–19a, 161/20a–b, 162/20a–21b.

238 GZDJQ, 10082. In Chongqing prefecture alone, 5,580 militiamen were quickly hired in the spring of 1800. *XFFL*, 164/7a.

239 *XFFL*, 145/24a, 149/37b–38a, 162/1a–5b, 165/17a–19b, 169/9a–12a. For Wu's distrust of militias, *XFFL*, 110/5a–b.

240 *XFFL*, 148/9a, 149/29b–33b, 150/4b–10a, 151/19b–23a, 153/11a–b, 154/41b–42a, 154/43b–44a, 156/5a–b, 162/1a–5b, 162/10b–11a, 174/25b–26a, 192/1a–3b, 202/14b–18b. The real figure would have been bigger; Gucheng alone recruited 2,700 militiamen by drawing one man from every household.

241 *XFFL*, 150/24a–25b, 154/44a–b. In the summer of 1800, Taibu repatriated 669 injured and sick soldiers. *XFFL*, 188/22a–25b, 188/27a–28b. In fact, Jiaqing began talking about repatriating invalids to save money late in 1799. *XFFL*, 130/18b–19a.

242 Wen's plan was to concentrate the regular military forces only in key strategic points so that they could be used as mobile forces to go wherever the insurgents went but not be exhausted chasing the rebels. And it was easier to supply them this way. *XFFL*, 155/12b–17b, 155/20a–b.

243 *XFFL*, 168/6a–7a, 168/8a–10b, 178/12a–14b, 178/15b–17b, 178/18b–20a. There was a consensus among the campaign leaders that the new soldiers were not effective. Eldemboo complained at the beginning of 1800 about those who had arrived the previous year (*XFFL*, 144/7a–b), and then Lu Youren did so in early 1801 (*XFFL*, 235/6b–12b).

244 *XFFL*, 163/30b–31b, 169/13b–17b.

245 In the early summer (the intercalary month) in several edicts, some long, Jiaqing urged all the battleground provinces to recruit more unpaid militias but reduce the paid ones. He stressed rewarding meritorious ones with sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-rank hat trappings and an audience with the emperor. *XFFL*, 172/31b–35b, 172/38b–39a, 175/27a–33a, 177/3b–7b, 179/14a–15a.

246 On 02/07/22, Qianlong called for all villages to organize militias and encouraged the gentry class to recruit volunteers and help the troops in checking the rebels. *XFFL*, 45/10a. Also see *XFFL*, 4/67a–8a.

247 Xianfu, Sichuan's provincial judicial commissioner, had suggested this in early 1797. His plan was to provide the militias with stipends and food rations only when they were called to action, whereas they should return to their own

professions and be responsible for their own expenses once the rebels were defeated or repulsed. *XFFL*, 126/16b–18a. The plan was obviously not followed.

248 *XFFL*, 184/25b–26a; *QSLJQ*, 69/16b. At the end of 1800, Lu Youren gave a similar explanation of the differences between the two, though he used "official braves" (*guanyong*) to refer to the paid militias and "civilian braves" (*minyong*) to refer to the volunteer militias. *XFFL*, 216/5a–6a.

249 *XFFL*, 177/5b–6b.

250 *XFFL*, 172/38b–39a, 174/31a–b, 177/5b–6b, 215/9a–b. Shortly before, at Songyun's request, Jiaqing granted a promotion posthumously to a killed "righteous brave" of Nanzhang, who had had an officer position, for organizing a militia using his own money. *XFFL*, 162/1a–5b, 162/8a–b.

251 The editors of *XFFL* praised Jiaqing as the mastermind who initiated the militias and fortification, and attributed the final victory in the campaign to Jiaqing's "farsighted" and "wise" decisions. *XFFL*, 169/18b.

252 Gong, "Pingzeiyi," in *Danjingzhai wenchao*, *waipian*, 1/18a.

253 *XFFL*, 158/16a–b.

254 *XFFL*, 144/8b–9a, 154/40b, 157/7b–8b, 158/16a, 173/3a–5b, 173/6b, 180/4b–6a, 235/6b–12b. There were a few exceptions. In the summer of 1800, five thousand volunteer militiamen led by the acting Longzhou prefect foiled the Gao-Ma band's attempt to cross the Wei River to the north. *XFFL*, 198/23a–24b.

255 Late in 1800, Jiang Sheng recruited tens of thousands of "righteous braves" to aid the regulars in manning the checkpoints along the borders of Yunxian, Zhushan, and Zhuxi. They were given only food rations only when on duty. *XFFL*, 206/12b–18a, 209/15a–17b, 217/16a–20a.

256 *XFFL*, 173/3a–5b; Wu, *Yijiang bilu*, 1/16a–b.

257 *XFFL*, 175/12b–13a.

258 Jiaqing approved this proposal. *XFFL*, 211/4a, 229/6b–14a.

259 *XFFL*, 184/25a–29a; *QSLJQ*, 69/16a–18b. For more on the surcharges, see the Conclusion.

260 *QSLJQ*, 70/12a–14b.

261 Lebao and Delengtai reported that they had converted paid militias into volunteer militias in some places but kept either half or all of them in other places. Lebao pointed out that he had brought from Guizhou about a thousand militiamen on duty in Kuizhou and Wushan, and they had to be paid with war funds. *XFFL*, 203/24a–26a.

262 GZDJQ, 7059; *XFFL*, 228/19b–20a, 231/36b–41a. But Lebao had also reported that the volunteer militias had helped in the fighting, which won Jiaqing's repeated praise. *XFFL*, 189/17b.

263 *XFFL*, 236/8b–9b, 236/15b–16a.

264 *XFFL*, 231/6b–15a. Lu Youren had echoed Wen's proposal by calling for troops to be stationed at critical points, with volunteer militias guarding checkpoints along the border with Sichuan. *XFFL*, 216/4a–7b.

265 *XFFL*, 231/19b–20b.

266 *XFFL*, 232/26a–31b, 232/31b–33a, 241/1a–8a, 241/15b–17b; *QSLJQ*, 80/4a–b. Šulin also refused to send 252 Henan troops back home, as they were strong and skillful. *XFFL*, 234/16a–17a.

267 *XFFL*, 229/30a–32a.

268 *XFFL*, 253/5a–15a.

269 *XFFL*, 253/16b–17a.

270 According to Eldemboo, surrendered rebels were also placed as "new braves." *XFFL*, 328/8b–16a.

271 *QSLJQ*, 99/24b–5a.
272 *QSLJQ*, 99/25a–26b; *XFFL*, 323/29a–32a.
273 Edict, 09/01/25, NGDK, 125650.
274 NGDK, 125650. Shortly before, on 08/12/20, speaking of the difficulty of cutting the militias, Jiaqing had expressed a similar idea: strengthening the regulars so that the state would not rely on the militias in case of emergencies and former militiamen would stand in awe of the regular forces. *XFFLXB*, 22/36b–37b.
275 *XFFL*, 13/45b–46a.
276 Suzuki discusses the mutinies in *Shinchō chūkishi*, 214–17.
277 Taibu first proposed the setting up of a new command at Wulang in late 1799. *XFFL*, 131/14b–17b. Throughout 1800, Taibu and Changlin set about materializing the plan. Before he was dismissed late in the year, Taibu had recruited six hundred militiamen for the command. *XFFL*, 142/14b–18a, 142/20a, 144/32b–36a, 144/39b, 164/39b–41a, 169/9a–11b, 186/28a–29a, 190/17b–18a.
278 By 1802, the barracks of the command had not yet been built. *XFFL*, 242/4a–11b, 248/8b–11a, 251/28b–32b, 304/15b–19a, 312/22a–23b.
279 *XFFLFB*, 6/34b–35b. Altogether, there were eight thousand militiamen-cum-soldiers in Shaanxi.
280 *XFFLFB*, *j*. 1–6 passim, 9/1a–7a, 10/40a–46b; *JQSYD*, 11:554–778 passim.
281 *XFFLFB*, *j*. 9 passim, 10/5a–20b, 11/20b–23b; *JQSYD*, 12:18–21, 26–27, 52–53.
282 *XFFLFB*, 9/27b–32a, 10/1a–4b, 10/30b–40a, 11/5a–16b; *JQSYD*, 12:38–39, 44–45, 55–57, 104–5.
283 Wei Yuan, *Shengwuji*, 362–64.
284 *XFFLFB*, 11/1a–2b.
285 *XFFLFB*, *j*. 4–7, 8/21b–30a.
286 *XFFLFB*, *j*. 12.
287 Jiaqing wrote this in one of his countless poems on the White Lotus campaign: "Indeed there are too many militiamen; but more than half of them are dregs." *XFFL*, *juanshou*, 6/15b.

7. COST

Epigraph: *XFFL*, 127/23b–24a.
1 And total revenue was down to 47 to 48 million during the Jiaqing period. Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 41–42, 148–70.
2 This is also the case for the earlier wars. Theobald, *War Finance*, 29–36.
3 *XFFL*, 34/32b. The total funds sent to the war by the end of 1797 actually is 29.9 million, according to Table 7.1.
4 *QSLJQ*, 39/6b–7a; *XFFL*, 89/14a, 90/18b, 123/12b, 128/32b–33a, 162/17a–18a. About 46.3 million taels from all sources, according to Table 7.1.
5 Jiaqing stated this several times, first in the third month of 1800, then in mid-1800, at the end of 1800, and at the beginning of 1801. *XFFL*, 162/17a–18a, 177/3b–4b. But the figure was only 58.7 million by the end of 1799 and 73.3 by the end of 1800, as shown in Table 7.1.
6 The Shaanxi officials mentioned more than once that their province received more than 11 million taels by the spring of 1799. *XFFL*, 97/8b-9a, 112/12a. As was reported to the Ministry of Revenue in 1803, Shaanxi received 10 million taels in the first three years of the war. NGDK, 225425. In late 1799, Kuilun stated that the province received 19.5 million taels by that time. *XFFL*, 126/12a.

7 The ministry's treasury received only 5,734,496 taels in 1796. The average amount was 12,123,597 taels during the Qianlong period and 11,053,055 taels during Jiaqing period. Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 147, 175, 184.

8 When Lu Youren asked Hunan to send 150,000 *shi* of rice to Shaanxi in early 1801, Jiaqing let Hunan deduct the transportation cost from its taxes. *XFFL*, 233/8a–11a.

9 *XFFL*, 352/24b–25a.

10 In the tenth month, 1796, Bi Yuan and Wang Xin requested another 2 million taels shortly after 4 million taels were allocated to Hubei and Henan, citing the hiring of militias, relieving refugees, disaster relief, and the arrival of six thousand reinforcements. *XFFL*, 20/4a–b.

11 *XFFL*, 55/15a–b.

12 When the 4 million taels arrived in early 1798, there were already 3 million taels of outstanding payments awaiting, including the pay to the troops and the militias, hiring draft animals, and purchasing supplies and ammunition. *XFFL*, 68/23b–24a, 68/27b.

13 When the 4 million taels arrived, 2 million were sent to Chengdu, but soon only 432,000 taels were left after 396,000 were spent for ammunition, uniforms, and transportation costs; 590,000 for purchasing grain; and 582,000 for paying back funds designated for the Green Standard garrisons in Sichuan and the military station in Tibet. There were other expenses outstanding: troops' stipends and allowances, relief funds, rewards, and death allowances. Of the 2 million taels sent to the logistical bureaus in Baoning and Dazhou, only 700,000 were left after having paid allowances to all the deployed troops in Sichuan and wages to the laborers at all the grain stations. *XFFL*, 79/9a–12b, 81/1a–b.

14 In the summer of 1798, Jing'an and G'aoki requested 1.5 million taels to relieve the refugees and repair infrastructures in Hubei. Qianlong granted 1 million taels to them. *XFFL*, 74/39b–42a. At the year's end, Qianlong endorsed 2 million taels of the 3 million requested by Shaanxi, which had received 2 million taels six months earlier. *XFFL*, 83/24b–27a.

15 Per Guwanghing's estimates, Eldemboo and Delengtai needed 100,000 to 200,000 taels (*shiyuwan liang*) per month, and Qishiwu and Zhu Shedou needed more than 30,000 taels per month. GZDJQ, 4753; *XFFL*, 145/10b–11a.

16 From 04/11 to 05/01, Guwanghing dealt out 450,000 taels, about 150,000 taels per month. *XFFL*, 147/29b–30a. In the spring of 1800, Guwanghing reported that he spent 1,460,000 taels in four months, including 180,000 to Kuilun and 80,000 sent to Chengdu. *XFFL*, 159/16b–17a.

17 In 1802, the Ministry of Revenue turned down Changlin's claim for 32,500 taels for one-month stipends to reward the Gansu troops who had fought outside Gansu. The rejection was on the ground that it was difficult to confirm that the troops had not already received the reward from the provinces in which they had fought. Lukang, 07/07/02, NGDK, 111164.

18 Qianlong granted only small gifts such as purses to the troops after they allegedly killed ten thousand rebels in Dongxiang's Xiangluping in the spring, 1797. *XFFL*, 40/33a–34b. But he granted one-month stipends to Funing's and Eldemboo's troops, including the ethnic soldiers, after they took down the insurgents' stronghold at Bayeshan. *XFFL*, 41/36b–37b.

19 In the summer of 1797, Qianlong granted one-month stipends to the troops and one-month food rations to the militias when Old Fifth Sun was killed and both Xu Tiande's and Wang Sanhuai's mothers were captured. He also granted the injured troops one-month stipends. *XFFL*, 41/17a–19b.

20 On the two types of coffers, see Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 6–7.

21 According to historian Shi Zhihong, the reserves in the inner coffers usually totaled more than 1 million taels. It seems that the amount should be higher, because several allocations from the inner coffers were as high as 4 million each in 1796 and 1797.

22 The treasury of the Ministry of Revenue disbursed 18,541,762 taels in 1796, 35,168,049 in 1797, and 25,147,965 in 1798. Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 78–79, 184–85, 259–60. Compounded with the nationwide tax remission, the deficits were record high: 12,807,266 taels in 1796 and 8,734,039 taels in 1798 (there is no record for 1797, which could have been even higher than 1796 and 1798). Shi, Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 197.

23 Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 110–11.

24 *QSLJQ*, 37/18b–19b; *XFFL*, 87/8a–9b. Then he mentioned the figure repeatedly. *XFFL*, 89/14a–b, 90/18b–20a.

25 That is, 18,541,762 taels in 1796, 35,168,049 taels in 1797, and 25,147,965 taels in 1798. Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 184–86.

26 In early 1800, Jiaqing expressed his deep concern over the fast draining of the silver reserves when writing to Nayancheng, who was then in Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 124/13b–14a. Late in the year, Jiaqing again related his concerns to Lu Youren, Shaanxi's new governor. *XFFL*, 209/19a–20a.

27 *QSLJQ*, 39/7a–b; *XFFL*, 89/14b, 108/40b.

28 After hearing from Songyun that some soldiers used ox hides to wrap their feet since their uniforms and shoes were long worn out, Jiaqing directed on 04/07/05 that, although the rules needed to be followed, they need not be overly strict and that supplies and awards to the troops should be abundant given the danger and hardships they endured. *XFFL*, 108/24b–24a.

29 *XFFL*, 143/11a–12a.

30 *XFFL*, 147/12a. Also see *XFFL*, 143/11b, 161/20b.

31 *XFFL*, 162/20a–21b.

32 In the spring of 1799, Lin Jun borrowed 60,000 taels from the merchants and shop owners in Chengdu. Lin admitted that Sichuan had done so more than once. *XFFL*, 90/18a–b, 105/3a–4b, 113/25b–26a, 118/31a. In the spring of 1800, Taibu borrowed 5,000 taels from shop owners in Hanzhong for purchasing grain. *XFFL*, 156/36b–38a, 158/15a–b.

33 In the late summer of 1799, Wesibu wrote to Anhui's and Jiangxi's governors and asked for 500,000 taels from each of the provinces, specifically from either their provincial treasuries or customs duties, as Hubei had run out of war funds and he had had to borrow 660,000 taels from Hubei's treasury for manning the border defense against the rebels from Sichuan. *XFFL*, 109/27a–28a, 109/29a–b. Wesibu claimed that 860,000 taels had been borrowed from Hubei's treasury in 1800. *XFFL*, 221/12b. Taibu admitted in late 1800 that he had borrowed from Shaanxi's treasury. *XFFL*, 204/12a–b. At the beginning of 1801, when Lu Youren reported that he had borrowed 620,000 taels from Shaanxi's treasury, Jiaqing approved his request for 300,000 taels from Henan. *XFFL*, 225/26b–27b, 225/31a–b. Three weeks after, Lu used the same excuse and the fact that the allocated funds had not arrived to request another 600,000 taels, which was also approved. *XFFL*, 230/31a–36a. In the late summer of 1800, Jiang Sheng borrowed 150,000 taels from Hunan, citing that Hubei had received only 520,000 taels of war funds for the year. *XFFL*, 189/25b–26a. At the end of 1800, Jiang Sheng reported that he had tried to support the campaign with provincial funds and that he would turn to Henan for [financial] assistance if emergencies occurred in Xiangyang and Yunxi. *XFFL*, 218/45b–47b.

34 *XFFL*, 109/27a–28a.

35 *XFFL*, 146/16a.

36 Jiaqing said in late 1799: "Kuilun and Songyun are both upright and have concerns for the country. I absolutely cannot suspect that they would have embezzled funds. If I cannot deeply trust these two people, whom else can I trust for important matters of war finance?" *XFFL*, 126/30a.

37 After his arrival in Sichuan, Kuilun received 3.5 million taels in several months, although he had requested more than that. *XFFL*, 126/18b–22b. In late 1799, Songyun requested 2 million taels five months after 1.5 million taels had been sent to Shaanxi—he had paid 660,000 taels back to Shaanxi's treasury, but the remainder was not enough for all the expenses, so he had to borrow 50,000 taels from Shaanxi's treasury again. Jiaqing granted him only 1 million. *XFFL*, 123/9a, 123/11b–12a. At the beginning of 1800, when Songyun requested 1 million taels from Shanxi, Shandong, Henan, Jiangsu, and Anhui shortly after he had received 500,000 taels, Jiaqing turned him down and harshly reproached him. But he allowed Songyun to retain 200,000 taels from the 1 million taels for Sichuan. *XFFL*, 128/5b–6b, 138/7b–12a.

38 In late 1799, Songyun reported that Ma Huiyu had retained 406,000 taels from the war funds designated for Gansu. *XFFL*, 132/5a. In the spring of 1800, when the arrival of Eldemboo and Delengtai hiked the expenses in Shaanxi, Songyun intercepted nearly 1 million taels, on two occasions, of the funds designated for Sichuan. *XFFL*, 144/ 20a, 153/23b–24b, 165/23b–24b.

39 In the late spring of 1800, Taibu requested another 2 million taels because Shaanxi needed about 500,000 taels per month, which enraged Jiaqing, who poured out his frustration in a long edict. *XFFL*, 162/11b–14a, 162/16b–22a. Soon after, Taibu again requested 1.5 million taels. Not only did Jiaqing turn down this request, but he also gave Taibu a "severe reprimand." *XFFL*, 166/27–29a, 166/30a–32b.

40 Finally, Taibu requested that the nearly 1 million taels intercepted by Songyun be counted as funds allocated to Shaanxi in the auditing, which was endorsed by Jiaqing. *XFFL*, 155/35b–36b, 155/38b–40b, 159/16b–19a, 165/23b–24b, 165/29b–30a, 166/27a–29a.

41 *XFFL*, 156/36b–40a, 158/15a–b, 159/20b–22b.

42 On the flooding in Beijing in 1801 and its aftermath, see Lillian Li, *Fighting Famine*, "The 1801 Flood," in chapter 9.

43 Although 200,000 taels are listed as from the Ministry of Revenue in 1802 in Table 7.1, the funds were land tax from Jiangxi and sent directly from Jiangxi to Hubei.

44 According to Shi Zhihong, only 24.8 percent of total revenue income was delivered to the central government during the Qianlong period and 23.2 percent during the Jiaqing period, whereas the rates were higher in earlier periods. *Qingdai Hubu*, 40–42. Therefore, more than 75 percent of the revenues were retained in the provinces. Also see Dunstan, "Finance of Imperial Munificence," 180.

45 *JQSYD*, 5:18. Henan could not fulfill, in 1800, another routine obligation of providing funds for the materials needed for repairing the Grand Canal in Jiangsu. *JQSYD*, 5:379.

46 *JQSYD*, 5:243, 365.

47 Dunstan, "Finance of Imperial Munificence," 207 and 234–35. Henan's annual cash revenue quota was 3.3 million taels starting from the mid-eighteenth century. Liang, *Zhongguo lidai*, 387.

48 Shanxi's annual cash revenue was 3 million taels. Liang, *Zhongguo lidai*, 387. The merchants of Shanxi specialized in trading salt, iron, tea, silks, cotton products, grain, oil, dyes, and timber as well as in the pawnshop business. Huang Jianhui, *Ming Qing Shanxi*, 72–147. On Shanxi merchants' involvement

in the border trade, see Lai Huimin, "Qing zhengfu dui Qiaketu shangren."

49 GZDJQ, 4029; *XFFL*, 73/39b–41a.

50 In the summer of 1799, Lebao requested to "borrow" 500,000 taels from Shanxi. Jiaqing instructed Shanxi to send 400,000 taels to Sichuan. *XFFL*, 110/29a–b, 112/1a–2b. Late in 1799, Nayancheng, on his way to the front, requested a thousand horses from Shanxi. Bolin, Shanxi's governor, purchased the horses using the monies "donated" by himself and other officials in Shanxi. *XFFL*, 130/20a–21a. In the late summer of 1800, at the request of Taibu, Jiaqing instructed Bolin to give 500,000 taels to Shaanxi. Later, when Hubei intercepted 200,000 taels designated for Shaanxi, Jiaqing asked Shanxi to send to Shaanxi 200,000 taels. Bolin sent 300,000 taels to Shaanxi but hesitated about another 400,000 taels. However, on being chided by Jiaqing, Bolin sent out another 400,000 taels to Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 194/16a–17a, 194/20b, 218/9a–b; *JQSYD*, 5:453, 461. At the beginning of 1801, Jiaqing told Bolin to take out 100,000 taels from Shanxi's treasury and give them to the two commissioners to Shaanxi, Wesingge and Qiu Xingjian. *XFFL*, 230/15a–b.

51 When Shaanxi asked for 30,000 *shi* of grain from Shanxi in the spring of 1803, Jiaqing told Bolin that it was better to send more to Shaanxi. *XFFLXB*, 25/18b–19a.

52 In early 1800, Jiaqing ordered 1 million taels sent to Shanxi for Sichuan and Shaanxi when either was in urgent need of funds. Soon afterward, Jiaqing ordered 500,000 taels sent to Shaanxi and another 500,000 to Sichuan. *XFFL*, 151/12b–14a, 155/35b–36b, 155/38a–b. Late in 1800, Jiaqing ordered 200,000 taels raised from merchants to be sent to Shaanxi and stored in its provincial treasury for future use. *JQSYD*, 5:461.

53 Early in 1802, Jiaqing sent to Henan the duties from the internal customhouses, the gabelle from Jiangsu, and the merchant "donations" for the needs of the battleground provinces. *XFFL*, 32719b–20a; *XFFLXB*, 4/1a. Later in the year, at the request of Wu Xiongguang, Jiaqing ordered 500,000 taels sent to Nanyang in case Eldemboo went to Hubei. *XFFL*, 342/33b–36a, 342/38b–40a.

54 *XFFL*, 304/7b–8b.

55 In the spring of 1803, Jiaqing told Ma Huiyu, Henan's governor, to prepare millet and wheat for Shaanxi. Ma promptly sent 50,000 *shi* of millet to Shaanxi. *XFFLXB*, 8/39b, 9/26a–27a.

56 *JQSYD*, 4:532. On the value of the title for the holder, see Dunstan, *State or Merchant*, 192. For a past incident of selling *jiansheng* titles to replenish granaries, see Perdue, *China Marches West*, 367–70.

57 *JQSYD*, 5:411–12.

58 *JQSYD*, 5:465.

59 On 06/11/09, Jiaqing ruled that, whenever the income from selling degrees reached 10,000 taels in a province, the proceeds be sent to Beijing. However, he allowed Shaanxi to place the monies in the war coffers to be sent to Beijing after the campaign. *XFFL*, 283/35a–b.

60 Zelin, *Magistrate's Tael*, 65. This practice had started during the Shunzhi reign and become widespread during the Kangxi period, but it occurred most frequently during the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods, during which time more than 65 million taels were collected from salt merchants alone. Chen, *Qingdai yanzheng*, 215–26.

61 *JQSYD*, 4:98–99.

62 In the spring of 1799, the salt merchants of Liang-Huai donated 1.5 million taels, of which Jiaqing accepted only 1 million. *JQSYD*, 4:158. By the spring of 1800, the salt merchants of Zhejiang had donated 1.5 million taels and pledged

another 1 million taels. *JQSYD*, 5:316.

63 *JQSYD*, 5:370–71. Later in 1800, after some wealthy gentry members donated 2.18 million taels to the campaign (1.5 million taels were accepted), their prefects and magistrates asked to "borrow" 100,000 taels from them. Jiaqing ordered the dismissal of those officials and prohibited soliciting local residents for donations for the campaign outside the war zone. *JQSYD*, 5:459.

64 The salt merchants in Shanxi donated 8 million taels during the war from 1799 to 1803. Huang Jianhui, *Ming Qing Shanxi*, 469–70. Historian Chen Feng holds that salt merchants had donated a total of 18.63 million taels to support all the campaigns during the Jiaqing period. *Qingdai yanzheng*, 220.

65 Dai, *Sichuan Frontier*, 197–216.

66 The total reserves in Sichuan's ever-normal granaries had been set at 2,827,700 *shi*. After having sent 426,370 *shi* to the Miao campaign and 1,743,500 *shi* to support the campaign in Sichuan from late 1796, only 657,830 *shi* were left by the summer of 1798. In Dazhou, 300,000 *shi* of grain had been consumed from late 1796 to the second month of 1797. *XFFL*, 35/30a–b. In Wanxian, only 12,000 *shi* of rice were left early in 1800, per Guwanghing. *XFFL*, 153/29a–20b.

67 In 1798, Ingšan and Funing requested 100,000 *shi* of wheat from Gansu. *XFFL*, 66/22b, 72/9b–11b, 73/39b–40a. Shortly after, Sichuan asked Hubei to send 30,000 *shi* of rice. As the rice sent to Sichuan had been earmarked for the banner garrison in Jingzhou, Jing'an deployed 30,000 *shi* of rice from Hunan for the Jingzhou garrison. *XFFL*, 43/7b–8a, 71/14a–b and 16a–b, 84/26b–28a. Even when the harvest was not good and grain prices were high, as in 1800, Guwanghing still told the logistical staff in Dazhou to purchase grain locally. *XFFL*, 153/29a–20b.

68 When Lu Youren asked Sichuan to send rice to Shaanxi later in 1802, 10,000 *shi* of rice from western Sichuan were delivered to Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 335/20b–21b. In 1803, Lebao agreed to allow agents from Shaanxi to purchase rice from the residents in north Sichuan. *XFFLXB*, 10/10a–11b. In the early summer 1804, Lebao informed Fang Weidian that Shaanxi could send agents to Sichuan's Shunqing and Chongqing prefectures to purchase grain. *XFFLXB*, 27/1a, 27/3a–4a.

69 Shaanxi prepared 10,000 *shi* of rice and 3,000 *shi* of wheat and beans as well as ammunition for Sichuan. When the Qing forces chased the Xiangyang insurgents from Hubei to Sichuan, Shaanxi again sent 16,000 *shi* of rice to Sichuan in two installments. *XFFL*, 42/22a–23b, 43/7b–8a.

70 *XFFL*, 166/ 28a–29a.

71 With the poor harvest in 1800 due to a drought, the rice price in Hanzhong had reached 9 to 10 taels per *shi*. *XFFL*, 230/31b–32b, 233/4a–11a.

72 Taibu purchased 3,000 *shi* of rice from Hubei's Yunyang in the late spring. *XFFL*, 166/ 28a–29a. Then, at Taibu's request, Hubei sent to Shaanxi 20,000 *shi* of rice from the granaries in several places (Shaanxi paid for both transportation and the costs to replenish the granaries in Hubei). *XFFL*, 166/28a–29a, 166/30a–32b, 174/27b–32a. In the summer, Taibu asked Jiangxi to send 100,000 *shi* of rice to Xing'an. He estimated that the armies in Shaanxi consumed 10,000 to 20,000 *shi* of rice per month. *XFFL*, 184/4a–5b. In the autumn, Shaanxi received rice from Jiangsu, Guangdong, and Guangxi. *XFFL*, 187/11a. Late in 1800, Jiaqing allocated 100,000 *shi* of rice to Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 230/31b.

73 At the beginning of 1801, Lu Youren requested 150,000 *shi* of rice from Hunan because of serious food shortages in southern Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 230/31b–32b, 233/4a–11a. In the spring of 1802, 6,000 *shi* of rice from Jiangxi and 20,000

shi of rice from Hunan were sent to Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 315/29b–31a, 319/15b. Shortly after, another 80,000 *shi* of rice were sent to Shaanxi from Jiangxi. *XFFL*, 327/13b–14b.

74 Early in 1801, Hubei retained 60,000 *shi* of tribute rice. Then Šulin retained 10,000 *shi* of rice on its way from Jiangxi to Shaanxi. *XFFL*. 224/13a–14a, 226/1b. In the autumn of 1802, Hubei procured a total of 100,000 *shi* of rice, millet, and other foodstuffs from Anhui, Hunan, Henan, and Sichuan. *XFFL*, 331/1b–4a, 331/29a–30a, 331/31b–32b.

75 The figure 3.5 million *shi* of rice is given in the notes to Jiaqing's long poem to celebrate the final completion of the campaign. However, the figure given there for grain from other provinces, about 636,000 *shi*, is not accurate. *XFFL*, *juanshou*, 53a.

76 Taibu had reported that the troops preferred rice to wheat, but he said that it was because wheat was prone to go stale in the wet climate of Shaanxi. *XFFL*, 166/ 28a–29a, 206/5a–6b.

77 It cost 1.4 to 1.5 taels (2 taels in the summer) to pack and transport 1 *shi* of rice from Sichuan's Baoning to Shaanxi's border. Then it cost 1.4 taels per *shi* to transport it to Hanzhong and somewhat less than 0.5 taels to Xing'an via the Han River. But it cost 3.7 taels per *shi* from Tongguan to Hanzhong, not including the cost from Henan's Shanzhou to Tongguan, which was paid by Henan. *XFFLXB*, 12/7b–9a.

78 *XFFL*, 336/3b–4a.

79 For the origins of the logistical bureaus, see Chen, *Qingdai junfei*, 265. For the bureau during the two Jinchuan wars, see Dai, "Qing State," 45–48, and Theobald, *War Finance*, 34–36.

80 *XFFL*, 14/28b, 22/10b–12a, 226/1b.

81 In the autumn of 1799, G'aoki mentioned that the logistical bureaus in Jingzhou and Xiangyang had been closed, but the one in Wuchang remained in place. *XFFL*, 115/26a–b.

82 *XFFL*, 312/25b–26a.

83 *XFFL*, 10/15b–16a.

84 In 1798, Lin Jun, the provincial administrative commissioner, headed the Chengdu bureau; Li Hong, the circuit intendant of northern Sichuan, and Ji Shengbao, a prefect, led the Baoning bureau; and Shi Zuorui oversaw the Dazhou bureau. *XFFL*, 126/23a.

85 *XFFL*, 107/19b–20a. After the rebels' Jialing River crossing, Guwanghing let Chongqing procure ammunition for eastern and northern Sichuan, and the Chengdu bureau provide ammunition only to western Sichuan, but he planned to restore the Chengdu bureau's full function once the highways were cleared of rebels. *XFFL*, 153/30b–31a.

86 *XFFL*, 66/23a, 107/19b–20a.

87 *XFFL*, 63/16a–17a.

88 *XFFL*, 43/6b–7b.

89 *JQSYD*, 4:56, 143.

90 *XFFL*, 35/29b–31b, 56/2a.

91 *XFFL*, 75/15a–16a.

92 In the summer of 1798, Ingšan and Funing had 100 militiamen each carry 400 taels of silver and deliver them to the Taiping front via bypasses. *XFFL*, 76/26a–27b. In the spring of 1799, Funing had 400 stout porters carry 100 taels each and deliver them to Delengtai in the mountainous intersection of Daning, Kaixian, and Taiping. *XFFL*, 97/1b–2b.

93 *XFFL*, 135/17a–18a. In late 1798, Funing stored grain in several counties in northeastern Sichuan. *XFFL*, 90/15b–16b. In the spring of 1799, Funing

stockpiled grain in civilians' forts in locations difficult for the rebels to access. *XFFL*, 101/14a–b. Guwanghing also stored silver and rice in civilians' forts close to the frontline. *XFFL*, 138/15b–16b, 146/32b–33a.

94 For abuses in the name of hiring laborers in the two Jinchuan wars, see Dai, "Qing State," 48–52.

95 *XFFL*, 35/29b–31b.

96 *XFFL*, 41/38a.

97 *XFFL*, 41/37b.

98 In the late spring of 1799, more than thirty laborers were killed when the rebels assailed a grain station in Sichuan's Yunyang. *XFFL*, 101/15a–b. Shortly after, Funing reported that attacks on convoys were frequent, causing the loss of grain and laborer casualties. *XFFL*, 107/13b–14a. In the spring of 1802, Lu Youren reported that porters were killed in the Qinling Mountains. *XFFL*, 304/20b–21a.

99 When this occurred in Dongxiang in the spring of 1797, Ingšan recruited laborers from other places. *XFFL*, 35/29b–31b. The same occurred in Taiping in the summer of 1797. *XFFL*, 41/38a. In the late spring of 1799, Funing complained about the difficulty of hiring laborers in Sichuan. *XFFL*, 101/14b.

100 Late in 1800, Lu Youren increased wages for porters in Shaanxi, because food prices were several times higher than before and the insurgents were nearby, posing danger to the porters. *XFFL*, 230/32a–b. In the rainy summer of 1802, Lu again raised wages to hire porters to send rice to the troops hunting for Gou Wenming in the Qinling Mountains. *XFFL*, 319/15b–16a.

101 *XFFL*, 130/11a–b.

102 *XFFL*, 171/12a–b.

103 *XFFL*, 312/26a.

104 *XFFL*, 182/7b–10b, 186/19a–b, 189/14b–16a.

105 *XFFL*, 259/24b–26a.

106 In the late summer of 1798, Qianlong clearly expressed his indignation toward Lebao for his mishandling of war finances. *XFFL*, 76/29b.

107 *QSLJQ* 39/17b–18a; *XFFL*, 90/18b–19a.

108 *QSLJQ*, 37/16b–19b, 37/22b–23a, 38/34a–b, 39/6b–7b; *XFFL*, 87/15a–b, 89/14a–b, 105/4b.

109 *QSG*, 11316.

110 For the Yongzheng emperor's reform of this practice, see Zelin, *Magistrate's Tael*.

111 For example, Guwanghing requested 300 taels per month from the "surplus after weighing" in the Dazhou bureau to pay for his assistants and clerks and all his operational expenses, which would be repaid with his brothers' "silver to nourish virtue," as he did not have a salary after dismissal. *XFFL*, 137/15a–16b.

112 Only once were those containers opened en route. In the spring of 1799, Yongbao stopped a convoy carrying 3 million taels to Sichuan before it entered the plank trail in Shaanxi and had all the containers opened and the silver ingots reenclosed in smaller containers of 2,000 taels each, so that one mule could carry two smaller containers (4,000 taels in total) and march individually. Yongbao argued that it could save mule power by 25 percent. *XFFL*, 100/10a–12a, 126/23a–24a. Some taels might have been stolen in this process, given Yongbao's reputation for being greedy.

113 This was mentioned in a report on Hu Qilun's case prepared by some officials in the central government. *JQSYD*, 4:163. However, it was not stated in the statutes and precedents of the Ministry of Revenue.

114 *XFFL*, 127/18a–20a; *JQSYD*, 4:347–51. After Hu was executed, it was reported that the exact amount of silver misappropriated by him was 83,961 taels.

JQSYD, 4:429.

115 When Shaanxi sent 1,010,000 taels to Sichuan in 1797, a shortage of 55,040 taels, a 5.4 percent shortage, was found. When Sichuan requested that Shaanxi make up the shortfall, Shaanxi stated that they had sent on what had been delivered by the Ministry of Revenue. In late 1798, more than 113,240 taels of shortage was declared by Sichuan when 2 million taels from Beijing arrived. At the beginning of 1799, when 3 million taels from the Ministry of Revenue's treasury arrived, Nashan received the funds. After weighing ingots from several dozen containers with the treasury's scale, Nashan claimed that those ingots weighed only 96 to 98 percent of the full weight, so that he had received 2.9 million instead of 3 million taels. In the spring of 1799, Nashan received 400,000 taels that had been retained by Shaanxi earlier, and he claimed that the silver weighed 380,756 taels, a 4.8 percent deficiency. *XFFL*, 126/22b–25b, 132/33b–37b.

116 Although Nashan was supposed to pay back this sum, neither Funing nor Lebao pushed for it. Funing simply counted the 800 taels as deficiencies. *XFFL*, 132/38a–39a, 139/24b–28a.

117 Nashan joined others in delivering rice to Shaanxi officials when Shaanxi acquired rice from Sichuan. *XFFL*, 335/21a.

118 However, when Cao was under investigation, the magistrates in Cao's prefecture all insisted that Cao had issued the silver to them with deficiencies at the original rate. *XFFL*, 131/30a–34a.

119 *XFFL*, 131/34a–35b. When 342,600 taels from Jiangxi arrived in Dazhou early in 1800, Guwanghing and the logistical staff weighed them with the scale of the Ministry of Revenue, which yielded a surplus of 3,180 taels. Guwanghing put the money into the war funds. *XFFL*, 146/35a–b.

120 There were 3,669 taels surplus from 700,000 taels sent to Dazhou, 3,126 taels surplus from 400,000 taels sent to Baoning, and 4,300 taels surplus from 900,000 taels sent to Chengdu. The surplus taels were added to the total war funds. *XFFL*, 141/12b–14a.

121 *XFFL*, 141/16a–b, 146/37a–b. In the autumn of 1799, Jiaqing rescinded an investigation of the staff of the Ministry of Revenue's treasury for sending deficient amounts of funds to Sichuan. *JQSYD*, 4:322.

122 In early 1801, Jiaqing mentioned that deficiencies occurred only in the first three years, and only surpluses were sometimes reported afterward. *XFFL*, 229/1b–2a.

123 *XFFL*, 81/4a–b.

124 *XFFL*, 120/16a–17a, 20b–21a.

125 GZDJQ, 2596.

126 *XFFL*, 93/4a–7a.

127 In early 1803, when Wu Xiongguang requested permission to endorse the payment of 0.5 taels "salt and vegetable allowance" per month to the orderlies of the lowest officers of the Green Standard Army, which was not in the statutes, he cited Sichuan's precedent. *XFFLXB*, 10/39b–40a.

128 At the end of 1797, when Eldemboo accused a logistical official of failing to keep his troops supplied, the throne ordered the official dismissed and escorted to Beijing for trial. *XFFL*, 55/31b.

129 *XFFL*, 93/5b–6a.

130 *QSLJQ*, 39/25b–26a.

131 *XFFL*, 82/23b.

132 *XFFL*, 90/19b; *QSLJQ*, 39/18b.

133 For example, Henan had sent fur coats to the troops of the Scouting Brigade and the Firearms Brigade who fought in northern Hubei in late 1796. *XFFL*,

23/30b.

134 Shaanxi's logistical services had provided him with 100,000 taels, but he demanded another 45,000 taels from Sichuan's logistical services. Mingliang argued that, although he had brought 1,800 troops to Sichuan, he also had Eldemboo's troops under him since the latter was sick. Therefore, he had more than 5,000 troops while in Sichuan, though not all of them were with him all the time. He claimed that he had not received all the funds he deserved. *QSLJQ*, 35/14b–15a; *XFFL*, 82/20b–24a, 85/18b–20b.

135 In mid-1798, Delengtai loudly and repeatedly complained about the logistical services in Sichuan while demanding excessively large amounts of funds. When Funing tried to be more stringent in issuing funds, some generals, including Delengtai, complained. *XFFL*, 126/17b–18a. In the autumn of 1799, when he went to Hubei, Delengtai blamed Wesibu for failing to send supplies to his army on time. *XFFL*, 128/20a. In the spring of 1801, Delengtai complained bitterly about Hubei's logistical services, which led to Wesibu's dismissal, as recounted in chapter 5.

136 *QSLJQ*, 32/8b–9a; 35/2b–3b; *XFFL*, 80/3b–4b, 80/7a–b, 81/4a–b, 103/8a–9a, 103/14b–15a, 133/20b–28a.

137 According to Funing, Delengtai received 535,000 taels in the one year 1798–1799. Kuilun later reported that, among the funds taken by Delengtai, 528,861 taels were used for the troops' stipends and subsidies and for transporting supplies, and 132,239 taels were borrowed by the troops for their uniforms and equipment. *XFFL*, 133/20b–28a.

138 *XFFL*, 97/1a–5b, 103/8a–11b, 105/1b–2a, 3b–4a, 107/16a–20b, 108/35a–38a, 110/25a–26a. According to Tan Guangdian, Delengtai had more than eight thousand men when he came to Sichuan in mid-1798, and the usual size of his force was seven to eight thousand, although at some points during his stay in Sichuan he had more than ten thousand troops. XFFL, 133/27b–28a.

139 *XFFL*, 131/10b–12a.

140 *XFFL*, 192/9a–12b.

141 Lebao and Delengtai stated that, after Guwanghing's return to Beijing, some troops had been sent to Gansu, some invalids had been cut, and some Sichuan garrison troops had returned to their own garrisons and thus were no longer paid from war funds. *XFFL*, 203/22b–27a.

142 *XFFL*, 161/11b–12a, 204/12a–b.

143 *XFFLXB*, 8/26b–27b; SHD, 08/03, 57–58.

144 *XFFLXB*, 10/30b–31b; SHD, 08/04/06, 37–38.

145 *XFFL*, 135/16b–17a, 344/14b–15a.

146 *XFFL*, 140/6a–7a.

147 Lebao had also reimbursed this expenditure from Sichuan's salt and tea taxes. *XFFL*, 138/14b–15a. In the spring of 1799, Hengšui received 1,000 taels of silver from the logistical station at Hanzhong for awarding his troops. Deeming it insufficient, he requested to add 400 silver nuggets and 250 silver plaques, totaling 375 taels. *XFFL*, 135/12a.

148 *XFFL*, 129/20b–22b.

149 *XFFL*, 140/10a–b.

150 *XFFL*, 284/15b–17b, 284/20b–23a.

151 *XFFL*, 288/24a–b.

152 The Ministry of Revenue made the ruling in response to a set of amendments to the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* prepared and submitted by Lu Youren in which awards to troops were only to be paid through surplus (*pingyu*) war funds. *XFFL*, 344/14a–15b.

153 Funing added that, since the troops, both bannermen and Green Standard,

were brave in fighting and the campaign was at a critical moment, he had to make compromises, funding even expenditures not endorsed in the statute and that he usually provided more than they needed for items such as tents, weapons, and ammunition. *XFFL*, 90/16b–17b.

154 *XFFL*, 235/12b–15a., 235/16b–17a.

155 Zhou was a district jailer (*dianshi*) in Naxi county. *XFFL*, 146/32b–34b, 146/38a, 148/22a–23a.

156 *XFFL*, 97/1a–5b, 103/8a–11b, 107/16a–20b.

157 *XFFL*, 138/5b–6a.

158 *XFFL*, 138/14a–b. Guwanghing reiterated this shortly after. *XFFL*, 146/33a.

159 At the end of 1801, Eldemboo and some Shaanxi officials donated their own "silver to nourish virtue" to commission winter uniforms for Eldemboo's forces. Spending 22,150 taels, they procured 11,650 padded jackets, 1,100 cotton jackets, 4,895 winter hats, 4,879 pairs of cotton breeches, and 4,924 pairs of cotton shoes. *XFFL*, 288/18b–19b. In the autumn of 1802, Fan Jichang, Zhushan's magistrate, donated money to prepare 1,000 padded coats, 1,000 pairs of cotton shoes, and 1,000 pairs of straw shoes for Delengtai's forces. *XFFL*, 336/20a–b. It seems that it was not financially onerous to have the troops well clothed, since one magistrate's spare money was sufficient to procure thousands of items of clothing for autumn.

160 In early 1799, Wang Chengpei, vice minister of punishment, criticized the commanders for sometimes not issuing soldiers' and militiamen's entitled allowances for months, while continuing to request increases in their allowances. *XFFL*, 90/20a–21b. When Kuilun arrived in Sichuan, he was startled to find out that, despite so much money sent to Sichuan, soldiers had not received their stipends for months and were poorly equipped. As described previously, some soldiers had no shoes and used ox hides to wrap their feet. *XFFL*, 114/22a–27a, 116/2b–6b, 126/15b–16b, 133/20b–32a. After Chesenbao escorted Gao Junde to Beijing at the beginning of 1800, he reported to Jiaqing that the Qing forces in Shaanxi were sometimes short of food, having to eat the meat of dead mules and horses. *XFFL*, 136/39a.

161 *XFFL*, 206/4a.

162 *QSLJQ*, 39/18b, 90/19b.

163 *XFFL*, 126/12b–13a, 126/16b–18a.

164 As Eldemboo stated in 1804, the militias in other provinces had been paid 3 to 4 taels per month before he became the commander-in-chief in late 1799. *XFFLXB*, 28/5a–7b. Their pay was often raised when militiamen were sent to other provinces to fight. When the militiamen of Sichuan and Shaanxi were sent to Gansu, their stipend was set at 0.1 tael per day, or 3 taels per month. NGDK, 1133812. Also see *QSLJQ*, 172/ 17b–19a, 183/23b–25a.

165 In Sichuan, every hundred militiamen were given twenty paid laborers. NGDK, 027561.

166 In late 1799, Eldemboo set the pay to expeditionary militiamen at 1.38 taels per month, but he gave them food rations and a subsidy to hire porters (*fujia*), and he set the pay to the guardsmen militias at 3 taels per month without food rations. *XFFLXB*, 28/5a–7b. Meanwhile, the militias in Hubei received 2.4 taels per month without food rations. In Shaanxi, the militias received 1.46 taels per month and a food ration of 0.01 *shi* of rice per day. Wu Xiongguang requested to use the Shaanxi model to pay the last two thousand expeditionary militiamen in Hubei. SHD, 08/04/11, 61–62; *XFFLXB*, 10/40a–b. In the summer of 1804, Eldemboo and Delengtai asked to add 0.62 taels to make the allowance 2 taels per month for the last militias. Jiaqing gave his consent. SHD, 09/06/01, 51–55. But Jiaqing had turned down a similar request earlier in

1804. SHD, 09/04/25, 201–7.

167 Lukang, 10/03/10, NGDK, 113312.

168 *JQSYD*, 11:966. Jiaqing repeated this opinion several times. Also see *MQDA*, A318–83.

169 The injured militiamen in Hubei were granted the compensation as early as the summer of 1796. *XFFL*, 10/24a.

170 *XFFL*, 93/1a–b. Months later, Jiaqing reiterated the new policy in another edict to the war leaders. *XFFL*, 113/19.

171 In 1805, Fuqing, Guizhou's governor, asked for 69,453 taels from the central government to compensate 2,299 soldiers, officers, and militiamen sent from Guizhou to the campaign who had been injured, died either in action or of their wounds or illness, or were missing in action. He promised to check whether any of them or their families had already received the benefit in another province or had no family to receive it. Were there such cases, he said he would deduct the money from the sum during the audit. Fuqing, 10/01/22, NGDK, 115529. This suggests that double-dipping in claiming the death pension was not unheard of.

172 *XFFLXB*, 3/15b–17b, 3/19a–b.

173 *MQDA*, A301–96.

174 Cited in Wu Xiongguang's memorial, *XFFLXB*, 28/20a–b.

175 *XFFLXB*, 28/18b–22a.

176 *XFFLXB*, 28/19b–20a.

177 For example, 1,940 names were listed in the shrine to commemorate the fallen soldiers and militiamen in Baokang, Hubei. *Baokang xianzhi*, 3/102–13.

178 Wu Xiongguang, 09/12/23, NGDK, 188734.

179 Changming, 16/07/20, NGDK, 114654.

180 Guwanghing did not disclose his name. *XFFL*, 151/9b–13a.

181 Lukang et al., 12/11/29, NGDK, 109909.

182 Teqing'e, 12/02/09, NGDK, 41220.

183 Lebao, 12/05/27, NGDK, 64130.

184 Lebao, 11/02/25, *MQDA*, A318–34.

185 As they reasoned, many involved in hiring and leading those militias were either dead or left, and no militiamen had complained about outstanding pay when they were discharged or since. They ruled that Delengtai work out a plan that would have no loopholes and submit it again. Jiaqing supported their ruling. *XFFLFB*, 36/7a–9a.

186 Fang Weidian, 12/04/08, NGDK, 64114.

187 *JQSYD*, 11:966.

188 Teqing'e, 12/02/09, NGDK, 41220.

189 Yimian, 02/06/no date, GZDJQ, 2680; Yimian, 02/10/19, GZDJQ, 3287.

190 *JQSYD*, 12:374–75; Lukang et al., 13/06/16, NGDK, 113812.

191 Lebao, 13/02/25, GZDJQ, 82.

192 *XFFL*, 126/12b–13a.

193 *JXZL*, Hubu, *j*. 4.

194 Kuilun mentioned it in 1800 when he tried to use the Gurkha war precedent to justify the high cost of hiring draft animals. *XFFL*, 164/30a–32a.

195 Hešen, 03/12/13, NGDK, 2052.

196 *MQDA*, A287-114, A287-115.

197 *XFFL*, 6/17a–b.

198 *XFFL*, 21/41a.

199 *XFFL*, 4/1a–2b.

200 Wang Xin suggested raising the pay of the laborers to 0.2 taels per day, and 0.1 tael per day when they had no assignment. *XFFL*, 17/10a–11b, 30/23b–25a.

201 *XFFL*, 30/23b–25a, 48/13b–14a.
202 *XFFL*, 103/8a–9a, 126/13a–14b.
203 Tian Wenxu, Mingliang's logistical commissioner, suggested that Mingliang might not have known about the numbers of mules and laborers, since he had never asked. *XFFL*, 82/22a, 133/28a–32a.
204 *XFFL*, 133/25b–32a.
205 *XFFL*, 103/8a–9a.
206 *XFFL*, 103/8a–9a, 133/32a–43b.
207 *XFFL*, 66/24a–b, 93/4b–6a, 103/14b–15a, 107/18b–19a, 126/14b–15b.
208 *XFFL*, 126/15b–16b, 130/11a–17b.
209 Kuilun and Guwanghing pointed out that it was stipulated in the *Wartime Expenditures Statute* that the pay for transporting 1 *shi* of grain every 100 *li* be 0.3 taels and disputed that the figure of 0.15 taels per day given by the Ministry of Revenue to hire mules had been used in the Jinchuan war to hire horses—those horses were deployed from the local government rather than hired at the market. *XFFL*, 133/32a–44a.
210 Eldemboo must have brought this practice to Shaanxi in early 1800. In Hubei, Wu Xiongguang adopted it in 1801. When the Ministry of Revenue refused to endorse it, Wu argued that the Sichuan precedent had been followed in Hubei for a while. In the spring of 1803, Wu made a plea to Jiaqing for his approval. *XFFLXB*, 10/38b–39b.
211 At the beginning of 1800, Guwanghing reported that neither Eldemboo nor Kuilun had followed the guidelines and made the agreed cuts. Eldemboo let the officials keep their horse allowances in full and cut only their "draft animal and laborer allowances" in half. For the Manchu soldiers, he cut their horse allowances in half but allowed them to keep all of their "draft animal and laborer allowance." Guwanghing faulted Kuilun for having miscommunicated with Eldemboo. Meanwhile, Kuilun allowed the officers to receive horse allowances in full and all the Manchu bannermen to receive "draft animal and laborer allowances" in full. Guwanghing estimated that the total cost in paying those allowances would add up to more than 100,000 taels a month. However, Jiaqing sided with Kuilun and ignored Guwanghing's complaints. *XFFL*, 153/31a–34a.
212 Early in the summer of 1802, Lu Youren reported that he had to increase the wages for porters to transport rice in the Qinling Mountains. *XFFL*, 319/15b–16a. Before that, Hubei had issued funds to the armies for hiring laborers (seventy laborers for every hundred cavalrymen, fifty laborers for every hundred infantrymen, and forty laborers for every hundred guardsmen soldiers). *XFFL*, 203/26a–b.
213 *XFFL*, 203/26b.
214 *XFFL*, 253/5a–15a.
215 Late in 1803, Eldemboo cut out the "draft animal and laborer allowance" and paid officials and officers only their original "horse fodder allowance"; he paid soldiers only enough to hire the number of laborers to which they were entitled. *XFFLXB*, 23/21b–22a. However, shortly after Eldemboo returned to Beijing, Fang Weidian requested, early in 1804, to reinstate some of the subsidies removed by Eldemboo, including the "draft animal and laborer allowance," because some of the forces were still in action. Jiaqing agreed to his request. *XFFLXB*, 23/21b–23b. At the end of 1804, Wu Xiongguang promised to dispense with all extra pay, including the "draft animal and laborer allowance" paid to officials and officers and the funds to hire "long-term laborers" paid to soldiers once the province was cleared of the rebel remnants. *XFFLXB*, 33/31b–32a.

216 Tax postponements and remissions had been granted to the areas hit by the uprisings in Hubei since the first month, 1796. They were also granted to some areas in southern Henan in 1796. From the beginning of 1797, departments and counties in eastern Sichuan were repeatedly granted tax remissions. Fangxian received tax remissions from 1796 to 1799 and in 1802 and postponements in 1800 and 1801. *Fangxian zhi*, 4/12b–13a. Daning received tax remissions or reductions seven times between 1797 and 1804 except in 1798. *Daning xianzhi*, 3/2b–4a.

217 Chen Feng admits that there are very few records on this. "Qingdai 'Kang Qian shengshi,' " 345–46. In her article "The Finance of Imperial Munificence," historian Helen Dunstan probes how provincial governments coped with the loss of revenue when remissions were granted, but she does not discuss the levels below the province.

218 Sichuan's provincial treasury had been emptied by late 1797, according to Funing and Ingšan. *XFFL*, 66/23b–24a. In the summer of 1798, Yimian reported that Gansu's provincial treasury had run out of funds owing to the deployment of twenty thousand troops to the campaign, funded by Gansu, and sending 100,000 *shi* of grain to Sichuan, which was also paid for by Gansu. *XFFL*, 73/39b–40a. At the end of 1798, Yimian and Qin Cheng'en complained that Shaanxi's provincial treasury was nearly empty from tax remissions and postponements, including Xi'an prefecture's universal remission starting in 1796. *XFFL*, 83/24b–25b. By the autumn of 1800, Shaanxi's provincial treasury was empty. *XFFL*, 204/12a–b. At the beginning of 1800, as Zhang Hanchao penetrated western Henan, Wesibu complained that Henan had used its own revenues from both land tax and other taxes to make up shortfalls in its budget. *XFFL*, 85/30b–31b.

219 This was exposed by Guwanghing. *XFFL*, 145/11a–b.

220 *XFFL*, 74/40a.

221 *XFFL*, 110/27b–28a.

222 *XFFL*, 126/20a–b.

223 Although Kuilun planned to allocate 200,000 taels from the Dazhou bureau to Chengdu, 100,000 to Chongqing, and 100,000 to Shunqing, Guwanghing agreed to send only 100,000 taels to Shunqing and 50,000 to Chongqing, and he told Xianfu to borrow from provincial military funds first for expenditures in Chengdu. *XFFL*, 147/3b–4a, 147/29b–32a. But when 824,500 taels from Beijing and Zhejiang arrived, Tojin allocated 454,500 taels to Chengdu, 190,000 to Baoning, and 180,000 to Dazhou. *XFFL*, 168/35a–37a.

224 *XFFL*, 177/1a–b.

225 In early 1801, when 250,000 taels from Guangdong arrived, 100,000 went to Dazhou, 60,000 to Kuizhou and Chongqing, and 90,000 to Chengdu, from which some funds were given to Baoning and Tongchuan. When 600,000 taels from Beijing and Zhejiang arrived, 180,000 were sent to Dazhou, 120,000 to Baoning, and 300,000 to Chengdu. *XFFL*, 237/24a–b.

226 In early 1800, when 1.5 million taels (700,000 designated for Shaanxi and 800,000 for Sichuan) passed through Xi'an, Ma Huiyu, who was in charge of the Xi'an logistical bureau, pleaded to retain 200,000 taels in Xi'an, instead of sending all 700,000 taels to Hanzhong, because he did not have any funds on hand. Jiaqing agreed to his request. *XFFL*, 146/27a–29a.

227 *XFFL*, 145/17a–b, 206/4a–5a.

228 GZDJQ, 4753; *XFFL*, 145/10b–11a.

229 Zelin, *Magistrate's Tael*, 26–46.

230 GZDJQ, 4753.

231 GZDJQ, 4753; *XFFL*, 145/11a–b.

232 GZDJQ, 4753; *XFFL*, 138/16b, 145/12a–13a.
233 GZDJQ, 8042.
234 *JQSYD*, 5:541.
235 *XFFL*, 131/30a–b.
236 GZDJQ, 4753.
237 GZDJQ, 4753.
238 GZDJQ, 4753.
239 Ma Mingluan was later promoted to become Kaixian's magistrate. *XFFL*, 290/20b.
240 In mid-1799, Lin Jun purchased 600,000 *shi* of unhusked grain from local markets. *XFFL*, 66/22b. In the autumn of 1798, when the harvest in Sichuan was good, the logistical bureau in Chengdu allocated funds to purchase grain. *XFFL*, 79/11a. Late in 1799, Lin Jun reported that he had bought 1,600,000 *shi* of grain in 1797 and 1798 to replenish the granaries. *XFFL*, 118/30a–31a.
241 *XFFL*, 110/ 28a–b, 128/31b.
242 *XFFL*, 128/29a–31a.
243 *XFFL*, 128/31a–34a.
244 Jiaqing also expressed his willingness to grant funds to Sichuan once after the campaign, if Sichuan was indeed in need of financial assistance. *XFFL*, 128/33a–34a.
245 *XFFL*, 133/41b–42b.
246 In the late spring of 1802, Lebao reported that the armies in Sichuan had been supplied with rice from southern and western Sichuan for some years, since all the reserves in eastern and northern Sichuan had been used up. *XFFL*, 313/22a–23b.
247 In the spring of 1796, Qin Cheng'en set up sheds for and provided meals to Hubei refugees in Xing'an prefecture. *XFFL*, 4/4a–b. About the same time, Sun Shiyi also relieved the Hubei refugees in Sichuan's Youyang. *XFFL*, 4/13a–b. In the summer of 1796, the refugees in Hubei's Yunyang prefecture were given one month of foodstuffs and house repair subsidies plus seeds. *XFFL*, 11/6a–7a. In the late spring of 1797, Ingšan requested relief funds for Dazhou, Xinning, Dongxiang, Taiping, Bazhou, and other places affected by the uprisings the previous autumn. *XFFL*, 35/31b–32b.
248 Lebao reported later that he had provided 0.05 *shi* of rice and 0.03 taels of silver per day for each refugee. *XFFL*, 101/10a–b, 110/28b, 110/33b–35a.
249 Kuilun doubted that Lebao would have been able to set aside this large an amount of funds for relieving refugees if the troops were not adequately supplied. *XFFL*, 116/5b, 126/18b. Guwanghing also thought that Lebao would have used the money for other expenses. *XFFL*, 128/29b.
250 *XFFL*, 219/17a–27b.
251 *XFFL*, 24/17a–18b.
252 In the Xing'an prefectural seat, city walls were built between 1798 and 1800, allegedly funded through "donations," including 4,800 taels from Xing'an's prefect. *XFFL*, 165/25b–26b. In Dazhou, the local Confucian academy, Hanzhang Shuyuan, was commandeered and converted into a mansion and offices for high-ranking officials during the war. In 1802, the academy was reopened after Chen Yu, the logistical director in Dazhou, repaired it. Chen and other officials in Dazhou allegedly donated money to hire teachers and purchase land for the academy. In the subsequent years, the academy's building was further renovated. *Daxian zhi*, 13/17a. Cai Xing, magistrate of Fengjie from 1803 to 1815, donated more than 3,000 taels to repair the temple for Confucius. *Fengjie xianzhi*, 25/4b. Yan Zhaobiao, Kuizhou's prefect from 1799 to 1800, built a new office of six rooms for the Bureau of Confucian

Studies (Ruxueshu) in the seat of Fengjie county. In 1807, Yan's successor, Zhou Jingfu, rebuilt it. *Fengjie xianzhi*, 6/3b. There were also cases, albeit few, in which local gentry members initiated and funded such projects. For example, they recruited five to six hundred laborers and repaired the city walls of Fengjie in 1797. Then they organized local defense at the end of 1798 and the beginning of 1799, including making thirty iron cannons using money donated by residents. *Fengjie xianzhi*, 28/35b–36a.

253 *XFFL*, 127/23b–24a. The annual stipend of the highest noble rank, duke of the first grade, was 700 taels and 350 *shi* of rice. The stipends for the lesser noble ranks decreased with the lowest one, baron of the third grade, being 260 taels and 130 *shi* of rice. *Qinding Hubu zeli*, 1865, 73/7a–8a.

254 *XFFL*, 133/32b–33a.

255 *XFFL*, 97/8a–b.

256 *XFFL*, 97/8a–9b, 97/10b–11b.

257 *XFFL*, 153/14b, 155/35b–36b.

258 SHD, 08/07/16, 125–28.

259 *XFFL*, 259/24b–29b.

260 *XFFL*, 82/22a–b. In the summer of 1799, Funing reiterated these points, emphasizing that there was no way for him to control how money was spent after the silver ingots left Dazhou and went to the armies and the local government yamens, since all the departments and counties were hundreds or thousands of *li* away from Dazhou, and he along with Lebao only checked on the reports from the three bureaus every ten days. *XFFL*, 107/19a–20b.

261 *XFFL*, 112/16b–17a.

262 For a brief introduction to the system, see Chen, "Qingdai qianqi de zouxiao." On the audits of war expenditures, see Chen, *Qingdai junfei*, 176–89.

263 Chen, "Qingdai qianqi de zouxiao," 202, 212–13.

264 *XFFL*, 116/11b–12a.

265 *XFFL*, 229/1a–2b.

266 Edict on 07/06/21, NGDK, 171522.

267 Observation based on the extant records in NGDK. Henan and Shanxi had submitted their war expenses to the Ministry of Revenue since 1798, given their marginal involvement in the war.

268 Late in 1803, many officials who served in Shaanxi during the campaign were obliged to pay back war funds. Qin Cheng'en was required to pay back 100,000 taels. NGDK, 225422. In 1805, it was found that at least 700,000 taels had been misused or misappropriated in the Shaanxi theater. Lukang, 10/05/12, NGDK, 108467.

269 Those provinces include Zhili, Gansu, Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangdong, Fujian, Shandong, Shanxi, Hunan, Jiangxi, and Anhui. *JQSYD*, 19:868.

CONCLUSION

Epigraph: *QSLJQ*, 64/10b.

1 *XFFL*, 352/4b; *XFFLXB*, 16/39b–40a, 32/16a–21b.

2 *QSG*, 11251.

3 Officials who had died of illness during the war included Bi Yuan, Ohūi, Shuliang, Wang Xin, Hengšui, Šulin, Lu Youren, and Huiling.

4 On shrines to manifest loyalty, see Bonk, "Loyal Souls," 75–96.

5 *XFFL*, 242/38b–39b.

6 On the Eight Trigram uprising, see Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion*.

7 Jiaqing praised Cangling, Yang, and Saicungga for their speedy success. *JQSYD*, 19:110–11.

8 *QSLJQ*, 24/15b–17a.
9 *Sichuan tongzhi, juanshou*, 11/58b–60a, 12/5b–7b.
10 Only one district in Henan hired militias. Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion*, 236–37, 353.
11 Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies*, 49–50.
12 *XFFLXB*, 27/30a–31b. To reward his judicious suggestion, Jiaqing reinstated the dismissed Yimian. *QSLJQ*, 129/21a–23a.
13 *XFFL*, 333/14a–16a.
14 *XFFL*, 333/22b–23a.
15 Lebao also acquired Ma Zhaorui. But Ma retired shortly after. *XFFL*, 156/8b–12b.
16 Saicungga was kept in Sichuan as part of Delengtai's entourage even after being promoted to Guyuan provincial military commander late in 1800. *XFFL*, 203/22b–28b.
17 On Yang Yuchun's remarkable career, see Bonk, "Patronage and Personal Bonds."
18 *XFFLXB*, 36/13b–16b.
19 After the Ningshan mutiny, Jiaqing ordered not filling vacancies and eliminating the new military units in the Qinling Mountains or filling them with old soldiers. Delengtai and Fang Weidian thus proposed eliminating two thousand soldiers in Shaanxi, leaving only three-thousand-some in Ningshan command. *XFFLFB*, 4/32b–34b, 6/34b–38b, 8/16b–17b.
20 For example, in Henan, only 2,500 of those new soldiers were left by 1803, for some had filled garrison vacancies in Henan and others had been dismissed. SHD, 08/09/08, 91–95.
21 *JQSYD*, 19:278; *QSLJQ*, 288/18b–20b; Luo, *Lüying*, 86–88, 95–97.
22 The historian Ramon Myers has assumed: "It spent from its huge accumulations, and therefore, these large-scale expenditures must have had a favorable and stimulative effect upon employment and production. Only in the districts adversely affected by warfare did production decline." *Chinese Economy*, 72.
23 *QSLJQ*, 64/10b.
24 *XFFL*, 140/31b.
25 *XFFL* 219/17b–18a.
26 *JQSYD*, 16:207.
27 *XFFL*, 98/9b–10a.
28 The normal rate was 1,000 copper coins per tael of silver. In 1797 and 1800, tens of thousands of rings of copper coins were sent from Xi'an to Xing'an prefecture to meet the needs of the armies. *XFFL*, 54/26b–27b, 208/10a–11b.
29 Before the harvest in 1800, the price of rice had risen to 5 taels per *shi*. The local residents sold foodstuffs made of wheat flour at the price of 0.08 to 0.12 taels per 1 or 2 *liang*, and sold a pair of cloth shoes for 0.4 or 0.5 taels. *XFFL*, 144/7a, 174/1a. In the summer of 1802, the rice price rose to 5 to 6 taels per *shi* in Hanzhong and Xing'an prefectures. *XFFL*, 327/18a. Later in the year, the inflation worsened owing to a drought in the autumn. In Hanzhong, rice was as high as 9 to 10 taels per *shi* and corn 5 taels per *shi*. *XFFL*, 233/4a–5b.
30 The opportunities include sales to other provinces of Sichuan women who had lost their families in the upheavals. The Sichuan authorities intercepted boats full of women sailing down the Yangzi River during the war. The business continued at least until the early 1810s. *JQSYD*, 16:207.
31 Zhaolian, *Xiaoting zalu*, 258–59.
32 For example, some pawnshop owners and brokers in Hubei's Fangxian who had been put out of business by the conflict went to Sichuan to deal salt, which

brought them enormous profits. *Fangxian zhi*, 4/11a.

33 Zhao Kui, *Chuanyan gudao*, 200.

34 *XFFLFB*, 6/37b.

35 Huang Jianhui, *Ming Qing Shanxi*, 206–7.

36 When Wu Xiongguang met with the emperor in 1804, Jiaqing inquired about Delengtai's ethical problems. But Wu suggested that no probe or punishment be made because the war had ended. Wu thought that Jiaqing had agreed. Wu, *Yijiang bilu*, 2/24a–b.

37 Zhaolian called Lebao "unclean" in financial matters (*fuguibushi*). *Xiaoting zalu*, 419.

38 In the last two years of his life, Lebao served as head of the Historiography Department (Guoshiguan).

39 *JQSYD*, 24:411–12; Zhuan'gao, 6752 (1–3); *QSG*, 11139–46; Hummel, *Eminent Chinese*, 444–46.

40 In the autumn of 1802, Eldemboo requested promotions and honorary hat trappings for nearly fifty civil officials in Shaanxi. *XFFL* 331/25a–27a. According to Lebao, more than five hundred civil officials had been involved in the campaign in Sichuan. In the autumn of 1803, Lebao asked for awards to 62 officials, recommended 53 expectant officials to various positions, and marked 265 others to receive "consideration for promotion." Jiaqing endorsed all his requests. *XFFLXB*, 18/4b–5b, 18/6a–9. Guo Yuanji, acting Zhushan magistrate, and Wu Wenjing, acting magistrate of Junzhou, bought positions of prefect after having served in the logistical system in Hubei. *XFFL*, 234/14a.

41 The Grand Council approved Dazhou's upgrade on 06/11/26. *XFFL*, 286/16a–21a.

42 Li Weiben, an official from Zhili who had worked in the logistical services in Fangxian, paid up to "ten thousand" taels for losses incurred in the transporting of supplies. *Fangxian zhi*, 5/14b. To prevent falsification of losses, Funing obliged the magistrates in Sichuan to pay for grain lost in transit, regardless of the cause, which was endorsed by Jiaqing. *XFFL*, 97/3a–5b.

43 When he came to Sichuan late in 1798, Mingliang borrowed 1,000 taels from the magistrate of Taiping before the arrival of the logistical staff of Sichuan. *XFFL*, 85/18b–19a.

44 It remains unclear when and how Shi died. In late 1803, Shi was living, as Lebao asked the emperor to return to Shi his hat trappings, which was endorsed. *XFFLXB*, 18/3b–4a, 18/8b.

45 *Daxian zhi*, 1/31–32; Zhaolian, *Xiaoting zalu*, 258–59.

46 According to Lebao, dozens of civil officials who had served the armies or in the logistical syetem in Sichuan had died of illness. *XFFLXB*, 18/3a–b.

47 Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 78–79, 109–11.

48 *JQSYD*, 4:208, 5:232–33, 6:25.

49 In 1799 and 1800, Jiaqing twice turned down requests from the Shengjing general to subsidize, with money from the central government, the stipends of the bannermen in Shengjing, telling him to manage it from local sources. *JQSYD*, 4:296, 5:412.

50 *XFFL*, 150/1a–3b; *JQSYD*, 5:106–7.

51 *JQSYD*, 4:532.

52 Jiaqing allowed Shaanxi to keep the funds and use them as war funds until the end of the campaign—then this income was to be sent to Beijing. *XFFL*, 283/35a–b.

53 A price list for official positions, "Program for the Reconstruction in Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Hubei" (Chuan Shaan Chu shanhou an) was promulgated. Yu Tŭk-kong, a Korean scholar, had seen the pamphlet sold at market in north China.

Yantai zaiyoulu, 18a. On the mechanism of office selling in Qing times, see Kaske, "Fund-Raising Wars."

54 *JQSYD*, 4:158.

55 *JQSYD*, 4:259.

56 The figure was 21,523,280 taels, according to Chengde, minister of revenue. MQDA, A306-32.

57 According to the new rules, officials who owed less than 1,000 taels did not need to pay them back, those who owed between 1,000 and 2,000 taels had to pay back 50 percent of the total, and those who owed more than 2,000 taels had to pay back 70 percent. *JQSYD*, 4:196.

58 *JQSYD*, 5:416–17. Shortly after, Jiaqing ordered that the offspring of deceased officials be given deadlines to pay off their fathers' debts. *JQSYD*, 5:446.

59 Late in 1799, Jiaqing dismissed Ruizheng, the salt commissioner of the Liang-Huai district, for his slowness in paying back money he owed to the state and ordered him to pay to redeem himself. *JQSYD*, 4:329–30.

60 *JQSYD*, 4:530.

61 Jiaqing's original edict was cited in Wu Xiongguang's memorial on 05/02/09 but does not appear in other sources. GZDJQ, 5005. For its implementation in Henan and Shaanxi, see GZDJQ, 5005, 5416, 5402. After he became governor-general of Huguang in 1801, Wu Xiongguang implored the officials in Hubei to make donations. *XFFL*, 326/21b–23a; *XFFLXB*12/24a–b.

62 *JQSYD*, 5:305.

63 Jiaqing wrote to Mianzuo, the Uliastai general, telling him to suggest to Yimian that he make a contribution. *JQSYD*, 5:28–29.

64 Yimian promised to submit the money from selling his houses and land in addition to 13,000 to 14,000 taels of "silver to nourish virtue" that he had left unclaimed while Shaanxi's governor-general. *JQSYD*, 5:74–75, 95–96, 125, 144. He was finally fined 20,000 taels. *QSG*, 11172.

65 *JQSYD*, 5:232–33.

66 *JQSYD*, 9:186.

67 *JQSYD*, 5:112; *QSLJQ*, 61/12a–14b. In 1809, the Qing state increased the salt price for the repair of the Grand Canal. Afterward, it repeatedly increased salt prices for extra income throughout the nineteenth century. Chen, *Qingdai yanzheng*, 138–40.

68 Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 79, 197, 278.

69 Bartlett notes "a miscellany of petty economic reforms" during the Jiaqing period, but she does not specify them. *Monarchs*, 232.

70 Between 1800 and 1820, more than 40 million taels were raised by selling the *jiansheng* title in sixteen provinces (sans Zhili and Shanxi). This measure continued to be used during the Daoguang period on a smaller scale. Tang, "Daoguang chao juanjian." In 1814, Jiaqing endorsed, reluctantly, another round of office selling to raise funds to subsidize the campaigns against two uprisings in Henan and Shaanxi and a water project. *JQSYD*, 19:6.

71 *JQSYD*, 5:530; *JQQJZ*, 6:178. On Jiaqing's inclination to frugality, see Guan, *Jiaqingdi*, 14, 86–103.

72 *QLSYD*, 18:708–10.

73 In the late spring of 1800, when the rebels in southern Shaanxi moved away from the border with Henan, Jiaqing instructed Wu Xiongguang to send to either Shaanxi or Hubei the 500,000 taels that had been allocated for Henan because of the rebel threat. He added that Wu could use some money from the sum for the expenses of the three thousand troops deployed from outside Henan, but he should not use the funds for border defense manned by the troops of Henan, for they had been paid stipends and other compensation—it

was unnecessary to give them extra compensation. *XFFL*, 173/20b–22a.

74 *XFFL*, 177/3b–7b.

75 A few days later, on 05/05/01, in another edict, Jiaqing made a retreat from his position of using only Sichuan's funds for the campaign, explaining that what he had said was aimed to limit unrestricted spending, but he was willing to provide some money if Delengtai and Lebao could indeed make progress in Sichuan. *XFFL*, 178/7a–8b.

76 Shi Zhihong, *Qingdai Hubu*, 45, 109–11; Chen, "Qingdai caizheng zhichu," 139–43, 145–47. Later in the Jiaqing period, clearing the arrears became one of the most important issues for both Beijing and the provinces. *JQSYD*, 19:600–601, 603. Also see Zhu, "Jiaqing chao zhengdun qianliang," which concludes that Jiaqing's campaign to clear the arrears was a failure.

77 *Daxian zhi*, 11/32b; *Daning xianzhi*, 3/1b, 6/8a; *Fangxian zhi*, 4/10b.

78 On 16/11/04, Changming asked to reduce the rate of deduction from "silver to nourish virtue" from 50 percent to 30 percent for those who had not paid off their forfeits, to which Jiaqing agreed. *JQSYD*, 16:627.

79 There are numerous such cases in the records in the NGDK database. For example, several provinces listed the cost of grain bags used for sending grain to the battleground provinces. The Gansu government even demanded reimbursement of the cost of setting up roadside booths for greeting troops passing through local areas in Gansu.

80 NGDK, 217799.

81 On the rationale to keep the taxes low in Sichuan, see Dai, *Sichuan Frontier*. Levying of a surcharge had occurred in Sichuan during the second Jinchuan campaign and the second Gurkha war. *QLSYD*, 18:780, 784–85, 802–4.

82 Chen Feng thinks that this was one of the ways to raise funds to support wars in the Qianlong, Jiaqing, and Daoguang periods, but he does not name provinces other than Sichuan. "Qingdai caizheng shouru," 104. During the White Lotus War, it seems that only Sichuan collected the surcharge. According to Wu Xiongguang, Hubei did not collect it. *XFFL*, 304/24b–25b.

83 Jiaqing directed Kuilun to severely punish the culprits, even bringing to justice any officials who had done it. *XFFL*, 138/19a–20a.

84 *XFFL*, 184/25a–29a, 185/13b–14b.

85 *XFFL*, 237/24b–25b.

86 *XFFL*, 308/11b–12a, 308/20a–21b.

87 Not until 1811, shortly after Lebao stepped down as Sichuan's governor-general, was this exposed by Han Dingjin, a censor. Han reported that the surcharge had been renamed "labor and horse fees" (*fumajia*), and the magistrates had diverted the money collected in this name for yamen expenses. *JQSYD*, 16:207.

88 Guwanghing had a similar ending to Kuilun. After his return from the war, Guwanghing served in several departments in the central government, including as the head of the Imperial Household Department and as minister of revenue. However, his blunt demeanor won him many enemies. In 1809, Guwanghing was sentenced to commit suicide by hanging himself for a "breach of rules." *QSG*, 11301–2.

89 Peter C. Perdue has forcefully demonstrated this in *China Marches West*.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

ABBREVIATIONS

BLZZ *Baolianzhong qi wusheng Bailianjiao qiyi ziliao*
GZDJD Gongzhongdang, Jiaqing period
JQQHZ *Jiaqing qihuo zhuzhi*
JQSYD *Jiaqing shangyudang*
QXZZ *Qianxing Hubu Bingbu Gongbu junxu zeli*
SJXSBCJS *Sanjiaxiangcunjishi. Kanjing jiaofei shubian*
MQDA *Mingqing dang'an*
NGDDK Neigedaku dang'an
QLQHZ *Qianlong qihuo zhuzhi*
QLSYD *Qianlong shangyudang*
QSG Zhao Erxun. *Qingshigao*
QSLCSL *Qing lichao shilu*, Jiaqing period
QSLQSL *Qing lichao shilu*, Qianlong period
SHD Shuan Shaan Chu shanhou shiyi dang
QFFL *Qinding jiaoping sansheng xiefei fanglüe*, vols. 1–60
QFFLFB *Qinding jiaoping sansheng xiefei fanglüe*, *fubian*, vols. 68–69
QFFLXB *Qinding jiaoping sansheng xiefei fanglüe*, *xubian*, vols. 61–67

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